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58th year of publication

From Sudan to St. Catharines

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By Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Suraya Issa, a recent refugee to Canada, was born in war-torn Sudan on Dec. 23, 1981. The dangerous, ongoing twenty-year-old conflict between the northern part of Sudan, populated mostly by Muslims, and the southern part of Sudan, made up mainly of Christians, shaped her entire life until she arrived in Canada in August 2002. Sponsored by the World University Services of Canada's (WUSC) Refugee Student Sponsorship program, Issa enroled at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, in the International Studies program.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SURAYA ISSA

Issa and an orphan boy from the Democratic Republic of Congo in a Kenyan refugee camp.

Before Issa arrived in St. Catharines, she faced many hardships, dangers, and losses. She says, "There are three main parts in overcoming such hardships: a strong faith in God, patience, and prayers."

In Sudan many girls are not allowed to attend school. However, where Issa comes from in the western equatorial region in southern Sudan education is the key to success, just as it is in North America.

Longing for a better life, in her teens Issa applied for a program to escape Sudan and go to neighbouring Uganda to earn her high school certificate. According to Issa, the unnamed program was organized by community leaders. Because Issa came from a well-established, educated family, she was accepted into the program and received a scholarship, which was sponsored by a bishop.

Issa had no opportunity to say goodbye to her family.

While staying at Royal, a boarding school in Uganda, Issa dreamt of enroling in a university. She set two goals for herself — to become an international lawyer and to become a well-known model. However, tragically, her time at Royal was cut short by the death of her sponsor. Issa was forced to return to Sudan. When

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The Sudan peace process and Islamic law

By Elizabeth Kendal

Twelve months ago, on July 20, 2002, a historic peace deal was signed in Machakos, Kenya, between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). That document, known as the Machakos Protocol, provided a 'roadmap' for peace in Sudan.

The Sudan peace talks are sponsored by the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which groups Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda and nominally Somalia.

The Machakos Protocol granted Southern Sudan the right to hold an internationally supervised referendum on independence after six years of autonomous rule, and full religious freedom. Of course many hurdles lay ahead. The issues of power-sharing, wealth-sharing and religious freedom still loomed large. Efforts to resolve these issues would test the signatories' commitment to peace as talks progressed over the following year.

However, Machakos only happened because after September 11, 2001, the government of Sudan came under intense international pressure to make peace, primarily from a US administration waging a war on international terrorism. It was a watershed moment for Sudan.

After the signing of the Machakos Protocol, Rev. Enock Tombe of Sudan's Council of Churches said "both sides now must move quickly to remove the remaining hurdles to peace before momentum is lost." Unfortunately, as international attention has drifted elsewhere – primarily to Iraq and the "axis of evil" – hurdles have not been removed and momentum, along with international attention, pressure and patience, has waned. The concern is now that the peace process may flounder.

Machakos was a deal between the government and the SPLM/A. Yet for any peace deal to work, it had to include the other opposition parties, it had to be widened; it had to have a national consensus.

Khartoum Declaration

On May 24, 2003, John Garang, who heads the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and Sadeq al-Mahdi, head of the Umma Party, and Mohamed Osman al-Mirghani, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, met for talks in Mirghani's home in Cairo where he lives in exile.

"Any peace agreement reached in Machakos will require a national consensus," said Garang. "We are doing the homework for this consensus." (AFP, May 25) One appeal to come from this meeting was that the national capital, Khartoum, be ruled under secular rather than Islamic laws.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FAITH IN ACTION (WWW.LIAAFRICA.ORG)

Despite the hardships, Christians continue to rejoice and give thanks to God for the blessings they receive.

Presidential Peace Adviser Ghazi Salah Eddin Atabani said this was out of the question. President Omar el-Beshir declared Khartoum "will never be secular and we will sacrifice our souls" to prevent this. "We took power on June 30 (1989) to foil a conspiracy for abrogating Islamic Sharia." He said opposition leaders Mahdi and

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News

From Sudan to St. Catharines

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she heard of her sponsor's death, she says, "I was emotionally disturbed, but strong to move on."

Suraya Issa

Back in Sudan, Issa moved constantly from place to place. She says, "The people you meet or move with become a part of you at that time because you all have one thing in common — escaping conflict by finding a safe place."

Issa finally arrived at the Kenyan border, where trucks secretly carried people across to safety. On Sept. 26, 2000 she made her unplanned escape. "You don't decide that you want to cross or not," she explains. "All you have in your heart is praying to God for the border to open so that you are allowed to cross over into a safer land."

Once inside Kenya, migration services assisted Issa in her trek to Kakuma Refugee Camp. In the camp she was employed as a teacher by the Lutheran World Federation. She also did volunteer work.

Deeply disturbed by what she saw happening to several of her peers, who were purchased for illegal purposes, Issa initiated a program called the Voice of Refugee Girls in Kakuma (VRGK). She says, "It is a body that brought together the girls from the different nationalities in the camp since all of them were undergoing the same fate." The majority of the girls she worked with were Sudanese, and the remainder were Ethiopians, Eritreans, Rwandans, Somalis, Congolese, and Burundians.

Refugee girls asemble at school and wait while their teachers give advice before they enter their classrooms.

The program also came to be known as Lost Girls because the children it assisted were usually orphaned, unaccompanied girls at risk. Even if the girls' parents were still alive, they had no idea where their daughters were.

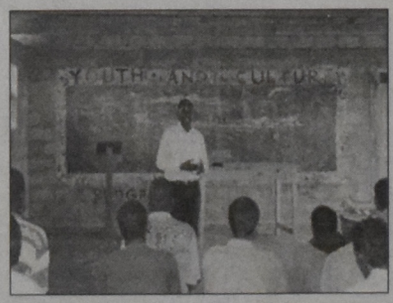
According to Issa, as these girls arrived at the camp, they were assigned to caretakers by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, some of the caretakers proved to be unscrupulous men who married the girls off to their sons.

Though the UNHCR provides free education in the camp, Issa contends that some of these girls did not attend school. She claims that they really wanted to continue with their education, but their caretakers told the UNHCR a false story, saying they attended school when they didn't. "Since I was one of their own, the girls were in a position to give me a much more detailed and different story than what is known by the UNHCR and the implementing partners in the camp."

Issa adds, "After all the trekking the girls underwent when escaping war in southern Sudan into Kenya, they still had a long way to go."

When Issa started the program, she changed the lives of many of the girls by creating an environment for them to meet together, to share experiences, to receive spiritual counseling, to pray together, and to create "sisterhood relationships." But above all, she promoted respect, not only among the girls, but also among their foster parents, teachers, and other adults in the camp.

In the Kenyan refugee camp she heard about WUSC's Student Refugee Sponsorship program. Issa came to Canada in August 2002 and attended Brock University in St. Catharines during the past academic year.



Classroom for young people in Kakuma camp

"It was quite an adjustment of culture," Issa says. "But I was ok with my classes. When I had 80% on my first essay in Canada, I knew I was going to be fine."

At Brock, Issa joined the International Students Association. "The great part was meeting students from different countries and backgrounds," she says.

Issa is still striving toward the goals she set for herself in the Uganda boarding school. If she attains her goal of becoming a lawyer specializing in international affairs, she hopes to eventually return to Sudan to assist her own country. "The first thing I would like to do there is to continue with a project like VRGK – something to help empower the girls and women in my country."

To attain her other goal, Issa is searching for a company to take her on as a model. She has had experience modeling in East Africa and also for a Vogue fashion show at Brock University.

Program helps refugees obtain education

Dianne Bergsma has been involved with the World University Services of Canada (WUSC) Refugee Student program for 15 years at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont. Professor Bergsma is a part-time educator at the university and is the Campus and Community Liaison for the Centre for Women's Studies. Her full-time job is Coordinator of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group, a student funded and directed organization with a Resource Centre. She is also the chairperson for the CRC Brock Campus Ministry Committee.

In a recent interview with Christian Courier, Bergsma described her role in WUSC's Refugee Student Committee at Brock.

C.C: Tell readers about WUSC's Refugee Student program at Brock University.

Bergsma: The WUSC Refugee Committee at Brock sponsors a refugee student for one year. Students are chosen on the basis of need, but also on their English proficiency and education level because their sponsorship includes tuition and residence costs for the first year of their university studies. When students arrive in Canada, they are granted landed immigrant status, which can lead to Canadian citizenship. After the first year, students are eligible for an OSAP loan and part-time work to support their continued education.

C. C.: How did you become involved with the program at Brock and what has your role been?

Bergsma: When I came to Brock in 1988, I wanted to be an active part of the campus community, so I've been involved as a committee member and host for 15 years. Having been a foster parent, I know that I can't solve society's larger problems, but I can help one person at a time. Through the years, my husband, Jerry, and I have opened our home and hearts to many of these students. Some stayed with us on weekends and holidays as they tried to acclimatize to a new country with different cultural realities. We enjoyed their company, and as we saw them learning, we also learned much from them.

C. C.: Have you seen refugees' lives changed because of opportunities provided to them through the program?

Bergsma: Yes, the lives of all the refugees are changed by coming to Canada — by having the protection of Canadian citizenship, by completing their education, and by seeing and experiencing a different world. One example is Moses Moini, who was sponsored through WUSC by Covenant CRC in St. Catharines and is now back in Africa working for the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. Another graduate is working in Tanzania. One graduate is teaching English As A Second Language at McMaster University. Many others have become contributing members of our society.

C.C.: How has your perspective changed because of your involvement?

Bergsma: I have learned to see my life through the refugee students' eyes, and to realize how fortunate we are in Canada and how many things we take for granted. We can go where we want to go when we want to go there. I shared with the students my enjoyment of the different seasons—the fall colors, the beauty of fresh-fallen snow, and the wonder of a long-awaited spring. My work and studies took on a more global involvement and perspective.

C. C.: How did your Christian faith motivate you to become involved in the program?

Bergsma: My faith motivates me to be active in social and political justice in my teaching and in my work with students at Brock. I want to assist where I can to bring about a better world where all people are given respect, regardless of color or creed. WUSC is an organization in which I can work with like-minded people on these issues.

Politics

Sudan peace process

...continued from page 1

Mirghani "are planning to undermine the negotiations and thus torpedo the entire peace process" (AFP June 18). "Any attempt to renegotiate that (Khartoum's religion) question will mean undermining the peace talks and aborting the peace process," said el-Beshir (AP June 19).

Sudan refugees

Then in early July 18, opposition parties, 15 non-government organizations and more than 40 individual opposition leaders signed The Khartoum Declaration, which calls for Khartoum to be a national secular capital, an end of one-party rule, a release of political prisoners and a transitional government to supervise general elections. The Khartoum Declaration was due to be unveiled to the media on July 2, but a government crackdown on opposition figures prevented it.

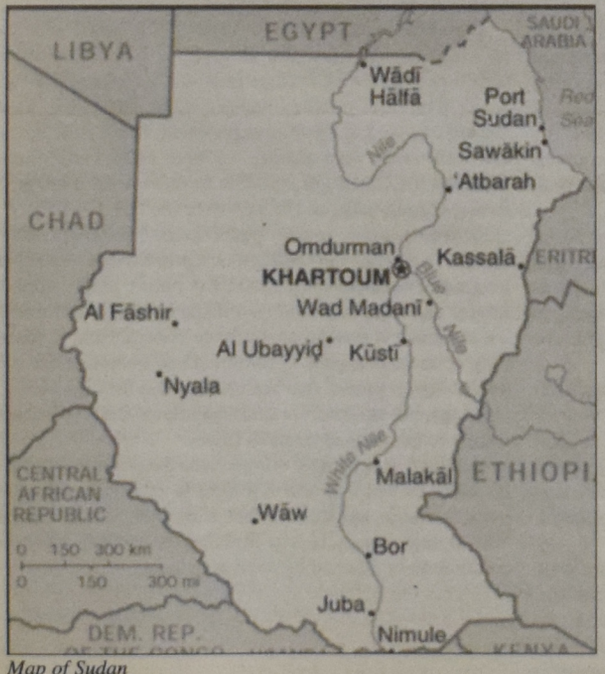
Islamist Pressure

There is a lot of Islamist pressure rising in Khartoum. On June 26, some 5,000 armed fighters of the Islamist Popular Defence Force (PDF) rallied in Khartoum, vowing to support jihad and el-Beshir's "revolution of national salvation" (national Islamisation) (DPA June 27). On July 4, Khartoum's leading Islamist scholars issued a fatwah: "Whoever approves or calls for the application of a ruling other than the Islamic Shariah -- like those who call for socialism or communism or other subversive beliefs that contradict Islamic thought -- is, frankly, an apostate," and as such deserves to be killed. Fourteen prominent scholars, including two university pro-fessors, signed the fatwah. (AP July 4).

Nakuru Talks

From July 6 – 11, meetings that were supposed to be the final stage of IGAD-mediated talks were held in Nakuru, 160 km west of Nairobi, Kenya. Those talks were intended to finalize the outstanding issues of the status of three disputed regions — Abyei, Southern Kordofan (Nuba Mountains), and the Blue Nile – as well as power-sharing, wealth-sharing, security arrangements during the six-year transition period, and religious freedom. Also, final documents were to be drafted for the parties to sign in mid-August.

The government negotiators looked at the draft document presented to them by IGAD and rejected it. A major stumbling block was the call for Khartoum to be a shared and secular capital (for north and south).



Map of Sudan

The SPLM/A saw the Nakuru document as a basis for peace. "For us, we see it as a way forward," an SPLA source said. "We are very happy with the draft, not that we agree with all the issues but it is a basis." (Reuters July 11).

However, the government response was toxic. President Omar al-Beshir told the Kenyan-based IGAD mediators that if they insisted on pushing the draft peace settlement rejected by his negotiators, then "IGAD and those behind it can go to hell." He told the IGAD mediators to come up with a reasonable alternative, or else to "dissolve the document in water and drink it." El-Beshir then gave a speech at Nur al-Dinn on how Sudanese government troops had fought a 20-year war to defend Islam. El-Beshir declared his government "is committed to peace but not to surrender" (AFP July 15).

One of the negotiators for the Sudan government, described the draft as "contrary to the contents of the Machakos framework ... unfair, contradictory and unfit to constitute a basis for negotiation" (DPA July 12). The government blamed IGAD for the failure of the talks and requested intervention from Egypt and the Arab League to help break the impasse (AFP July 14). Sudan's Presidential Peace Advisor complained that the draft proposals "differ largely" from the Machakos Protocol and "pave the way for secession of southern Sudan while Machakos calls for unity." Atabani has requested "entirely new proposals" (AFP July 13).

The Sudan Council of Churches strongly rejects the government assessment, saying that the draft is indeed fair and in line with the Machakos Protocol. They also expressed concern about interference from Arab nations and the government's request for alternative mediators, and called on the parties to return to the negotiating table.

The IGAD chief mediator, General Lazaro Sumbeiywo, also disagrees with the Sudan government's assessment, maintaining that the peace draft is fair, impartial, balanced and supported by the international community.

"End Game"

There is great concern that Washington, which appears to be running out of patience and

These scorched children (Feb. 2000) are some of the victims of the violence in Sudan.

commitment, might buckle under pressure from Khartoum and press for a "peace at any cost" deal. John Danforth, special envoy of President George W. Bush in Sudan, has expressed his frustration, declaring that this is the "end game," and warning that the international community would divert its attention from Sudan if an agreement is not be made very quickly.

It is unlikely that the Sudanese government would view that as a threat — probably more of an opportunity — while it would truly signal an "end game" scenario for the Southern Sudanese. Even as the Nakuru talks were getting underway the government was resupplying its southern military garrison in Juba in direct violation of the Memorandum of Understanding of October 15, 2002.

The government of Sudan has repeatedly terrorized and starved its people and violated ceasefire agreements with impunity — and impunity equals permission. As such, one wonders whether the government has any desire to pursue peace or even if they have any reason to.

The government of Sudan is a brutal regime that stops at nothing. Just last week warplanes conducted bombing raids of twenty-five villages in northwest Darfur, western Sudan, killing at least 300 villagers and wounding 200, with many dying as victims of a "toxic gas." The government targeted the region because it believes the inhabitants support an opposition movement. (AFP July 20). It is not the first time it has used chemical or biological weapons. This is a regime that has also used starvation as a weapon of mass destruction.

A rejection of the IGAD mediation and draft peace proposals would seriously undermine the very principle of a diplomatic, democratic peace process, and fail the long-suffering people of Sudan, who have lived with poverty, jihad and repression for far too long. Negotiations were supposed to recommence on July 23, but there was already talk of postponement.

Elizabeth Kendal is a researcher and writer for the World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission

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Editorials

Marriage by any other name...

Harry der Nederlanden

Despite the appeals of a large number of Christian churches, organizations and other religious institutions, the Liberal government has followed its own course and drafted a bill that will redefine marriage as between two persons rather than between a husband and wife. The bill also provides the freedom for clergy opposed to gay marriage to refuse to perform such marriages.

The draft bill, which the government has submitted to the Supreme Court for prior approval, states that "access to marriage for civil purposes should be extended to couples of the same sex ... in order to reflect values of tolerance, respect and equality consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms."

It concludes: "NOW, THEREFORE, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows: Marriage, for civil purposes, is the lawful union of two persons to the exclusion of all others. Nothing in this Act affects the freedom of officials of religious groups to refuse to perform marriages that are not in accordance with their religious beliefs. Consequential amendments will be added in the bill that is introduced in Parliament."

The first institution

Evangelicals reacted with disappointment and outrage, especially in view of promises made by the same government during the last election that it would defend the traditional definition of marriage. On controversial issues the strategy of the Liberal government seems to be to procrastinate until decisions are made for us by an increasingly activist court.

David Mainse, host of *100 Huntley Street*, declared that in "every dictionary on this planet, every language, there's only one meaning for the word marriage, [and] that is a man and a woman."

Appealing to natural law, world history and Scripture, Mainse said that the "governments of Canada, the governments of the world ... came thousands of years after humanity began to use the term 'marriage.' The first human institution was a man and a woman."

Mainse, in fact, resigned as host of *100 Huntley Street* in order to devote his energy full-time to other causes, particularly the battle against same-sex marriage.

Stephen Harper, leader of the Alliance, writing in the National Post, called the route followed by the Chretien government a dangerous precedent. After making solemn election promises and appointing a committee which held hearings across the country, the government has in effect turned over the responsibility of formulating legislation to an unelected court. He concludes that "the Liberals will demand that a democratically elected Parliament simply rubber-stamp the bill."

"This is a dangerous new precedent for the way in which this country will be run in the future," he warns.

Focus on the Family agrees: "The new legislation on marriage is a betrayal of the government's responsibility to defend marriage," said Darrel Reid, the president of its Canadian branch."The legislation submitted to the Supreme Court does not reflect the will of the democratically-elected members of parliament," he said. "Rather, it reflects the will of the courts, which have imposed this new definition on Canadians."

"Marriage between 'a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others' transcends time and cultures. It is not the property of the Government of Canada. Rather, it is the heritage of generations of Canadians and, indeed, of people around the world since the beginning of recorded history. [Justice] Minister Cauchon has characterized this new legislation as 'generous and open.'" Reid insisted. "We would ask: 'How can he be generous and open with something that is not his to redefine?"

Discrimination against heterosexual marriage

The government is asking the Court whether redefining marriage as a union of two persons is constitutional and whether the freedom of religion guaranteed in the Charter will protect clergy from being compelled to marry people contrary to their beliefs.

"These questions are far too limited," said Bruce Clemenger, president of the EFC. "The most important question is whether the government must change the definition of marriage in order to meet the requirements of the Charter. The reference questions should allow the Supreme Court to consider the range of options proposed by the Minister of Justice last November, rather than comment on only one."

The Supreme Court of Canada previously ruled common-law same-sex couples have the same legal rights as similar opposite-sex couples, extending such things as spousal benefits and bereavement leave to gay partners, so marriage is not necessary for gay couples to achieve equality in these respects.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops in a letter to Chretien wrote: "The prospect of the bill that you are preparing to present to the House of Commons in support of the redefinition of marriage by including same-sex partners would mean a devaluation of traditional marriage as the basis of the family and as an essential institution for the stability and equilibrium of society."

The bishops go on to argue: "The point is not that, because same-sex partners cannot have access to marriage, there would be discrimination. Rather, it is the contrary that is true. Enlarging and thereby altering the definition of marriage in order to include same-sex partners discriminates against heterosexual marriage and the family, which are thus deprived of their social and legal recognition as the fundamental and irreplaceable basis of society."

This argument may be difficult to follow, but Michael Coren clarifies: "I have heard people argue that it is of no concern to heterosexuals and will not affect them. Please! As a white man I was not directly harmed by apartheid, but I still realized the absolute wrong of this philosophy and thus opposed it.

"If marriage is suddenly fundamentally altered to include people of the same gender, it loses its genuine meaning to the rest of us. We may include in the cat family the earthworm. Does this make worms feline? Of course not. But it destroys the definition of cat."

A rejection of our Christian past

Reflecting on the question what difference it makes, David Warren, columnist for the Ottawa Citizen puts it even more clearly: "What we are much more likely to see is a movement of the 'straights' towards the values pioneered among the 'gays.' For what we now have, if you think it through logically, is not 'straight' marriage extended to admit 'gays,' but rather marriage itself entirely redefined. From now on everyone is in a 'gay marriage' — all married are 'partners,' neither husbands nor wives. The components have become interchangeable, and the effect is unambiguously to make 'straights buy into gay values.'"

Warren sees this redefinition of marriage as the result of a long history resulting from our embrace of equality as the highest value. In the name of equality gender distinctions have been increasingly stripped away, at least in the public square. In so doing, "all intra-familial relations were thus abrogated. There can only be 'partners,' henceforth; and as the whole notion of 'parentage' was founded in the 'heterosexual monopoly' on childbirth, children themselves can only have 'guardians.'"

Warren contends: "There can be no such thing as a human who is neither male nor female. A 'person' who is neither is not a human, but something else: an imaginary creature struggling to be realized in human flesh. And our laws now serve exclusively that class of 'persons' whose most essential human characteristics have been stripped away."

In another article, Warren muses: "The new Canada is no different from the new Europe, in its contemptuous rejection of its own Christian past, and its assumption that it can live, both publicly and privately, apart from God. We are engaged in a public experiment, to see how far we can walk away. And already we have walked so far, that God and his Christ are invisible to most; only a tinkle of fading church bells, as we pass over the hill."

Is Warren being unduly pessimistic? I think not. But I think he is shining the spotlight on a process that was begun long ago. We have long ago in the public realm stopped seeing marriage as divinely ordained or as a sacrament; we approach it instead as a private contract that holds as long as there is mutual commitment to sustain it. So it is not the "gay agenda" that has undermined the high view of marriage, but we heterosexuals ourselves. Let's be honest: we are reaping what we have sown.

Although it is a tragic thing to lose the traditional model of marriage and it is worth a fight to retain it, ultimately your marriage and mine is not a creation of any human will or legislation. It is a blessing from God. May we continue to be blessed by such marriages.

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Letters

Wolters responds to Campolo

The June 23 issue off CC carried a column by Tony Campolo entitled "Women who exercise the gift of prophecy." In a letter to the editor, Al Wolters responded: "Campolo makes an excellent point when he stresses that women too should exercise the gift of prophecy. After all, all believers are prophets, priests, and kings."

However, he objected to Campolo's dismissal of 1 Tim 2:12 "where the apostle does not allow women to teach and have authority over men in the public worship service." Campolo argues that we should treat that test the same way we do the preceding, which contrasts adornment (jewelry and fancy clothes) with good deeds. Wolters objected to Campolo's cavalier dismissal of that text and referred us to a column he wrote about five years ago (January, 1998).

We thought it worth reprinting.

Are Women Forbidden to Wear Gold?

"I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God." (1 Tim 2:9-10).

In the light of this verse, what are we to make of the fact that few Christians today have any problem with women wearing gold – or pearls, for that matter, or braids? Does this mean that they are all openly disobedient to a clear and explicit apostolic command? Or does it show that this passage simply reflects the culture of Paul's time, and is no longer directly relevant to our situation today?

In my opinion, both of these reactions to the prevalence of gold jewelry among Christian women today is based on a misunderstanding of what the apostle is saying here. Both of them fail to appreciate that the apostle is here using a well-known rhetorical figure. It is the figure which scholars have called "dialectical negation" – a rather pedantic name for a way of speaking which is common in both the Bible and in our own ordinary speech. It involves sentences of the form "not A but B," when the meaning is "not so much A as B."

We talk this way all the time in ordinary parlance. We'll say of a man who is head over heels in love: "He doesn't love her – he *adores* her." Realtors will say: "We don't sell houses, we sell homes." Allan Fotheringham recently wrote in his column in *Macleans*: "Olson isn't a first-degree murderer. He's the most perverted serial killer in Canadian history." Everyone understands that these sentences, despite superficial appearances, do not mean to claim that the head-over-heels man in actual fact does not love his beloved, that realtors do not sell houses, or that Olson is not a first-degree murderer. The negation is not to be taken literally.

The same is true in biblical usage. When the prophet Zechariah writes: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit" (Zech 4:6), he does not mean to deny that the Spirit manifests God's power in human life. When the apostle Paul writes to Philemon that he is getting Onesimus back "no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother" (Phlm 16) he does not mean that Philemon will no longer be Onesimus's master, but that the master-slave relationship will be transformed. When the Old Testament prophets repeatedly stress that the Lord does not want sacrifice, but obedience (e.g. Jer 7:22-23), they do not mean to oppose the worship which God himself had instituted, but they are stressing that it is the inward disposition that counts. It is a misunderstanding of the rhetorical figure of dialectical negation when some biblical scholars have argued that Paul expected Onesimus to be freed, or that the prophets of the Old Testament were against the Torah of Moses.

Similarly, the apostle here is not really telling Christian women that they should not wear their "Sunday best" – ironically, a person's best outfit has been called their "Sunday-go-to-meeting" clothes – but he is saying that fancy clothes cannot compare in importance to a holy lifestyle. That is a message which is not culturally relative, but is of direct and immediate relevance to Christians today. It is as true today as in Paul's day that women should adorn themselves, not with gold jewelry and other expensive accoutrements, but with good deeds that befit their commitment.

So I don't feel in the least guilty for the gift that I recently gave my wife. In fact, I think Paul would have approved. After all, what I gave her was not a gold necklace, but a symbol of my love.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario. 35 years ago, he also gave his wife a gold wedding band.

Peaceful ends by peaceful means

By Gerald Vandezande

Blessed are the peace-makers and justice-doers who act for the global common good in the wake of deceit, destruction and death.

The decision by Synod 2003 of the Christian Reformed Church to further study and explore issues of war and peace is a welcome, albeit belated, step to create a broader and deeper discussion within the CRC. Given the increasingly serious situation our churches and nations face because of the spreading military conflicts, refugee disasters, hunger and HIV/AIDS crises the world over, it is imperative that this important committee immediately go to work and report back promptly.

It should not take the two years Synod has given it. It would be great if the committee would soon provide (by 9/11/03?) preliminary advice and then interim reports as to what could be said and done now.

Meanwhile, it would also be very helpful to our Christian witness and public advocacy as churches and citizens if the Board of Trustees and other CRC leaders (such as the directors of the relevant agencies and ministries) would join in national appeals for international peace and justice to the President and Prime Minister.

Such essential participation in issuing confessionally grounded actions and ecumenical messages, in the spirit of the 1986 Contemporary Testimony "Our World Belongs to God," would concretize the credibility of biblical faith today.

Iraq

We all are aware by now that wars have often been waged to stop aggression and oppression. World War I was named "the war to end all wars." Spokespersons for modern military powers still believe this oxymoron. They use rhetoric loaded with propaganda about bringing democracy and freedom to captive nations and peoples.

Hence, America's latest war is called Operation Iraqi Freedom. To end Iraq's brutal dictatorship controlled by Saddam Hussein, American and British armies broadened their unilateral invasions of Iraq and intensified their relentless attacks on Baghdad. This horrific war, like others, caused thousands of deaths, displaced numerous civilians, and devastated not only Iraqi military equipment and government buildings, but also Baghdad neighborhoods filled with defenseless people.

Their immediate needs are desperate. It very much remains to be seen how soon and how well America's awesome military might and enormous economic power will be used to "help the people of Iraq build a nation that is whole, free and at peace."

Indeed, Iraq did need regime change. However, it must result in genuine democracy, shaped by enduring freedom, justice and peace for voiceless Iraqi people. They have suffered so much for so long, largely because of the economic sanctions and the terror by American and British bombings since 1991.

Not merely a distant goal

As the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. reminded the world in his Nobel Peace Prize speech on Dec. 11, 1964: "Every time we drop our bombs in North Vietnam, [Democratic] President Johnson talks eloquently about peace. What is the problem? They are talking about peace as a distant goal, as an end we seek, but one day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distant goal, but that it is a means by which we arrive at that goal. We must pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means."

How does Republican President Bush differ from President Johnson?

Bush and all political leaders should deeply reflect on these memorable words of America's courageous civil rights leader.

*...see **Peaceful means** page 11*

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Muslim scholars debate crisis of Islamic world in Kuala Lampur

By Amir Taheri

Recently, over 900 or so Muslim scholars and theologians gathered in Kuala Lampur, the Malaysian capital, to ask a simple question: What is the role of Islam in the era of globalization?

This was a star-studded occasion with many prominent religious and political figures from over 70 Muslim countries across the globe. The participants heard 22 learned papers and sat through some 36 hours of debate spread over three days.

One theme ran through most of the papers and much of the debate: The Muslim world, ridden by internecine feuds and conflicts with the West, is in deep crisis. It was clear that most participants regarded the Muslim world as a victim of injustice, misunderstanding, and unfair propaganda. Many lashed out against the "Islamophobia" that is supposed to be growing in the West with tacit encouragement from powerful lobbies in Washington.

Each time it was necessary to take a clear position; for example on terrorism and suicide bombing, the confernciers weaseled out with the help of demagogic pirouettes.

Global world western

Despite some attempts, notably by Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahatir Mohamad, at focusing the debate on concrete issues, the conference drifted into the uncertain seas of obfuscation where conspiracy theories make waves and dead souls assume the captaincy of phantom vessels.

The central question posed by the conference is both valid and in need of urgent treatment. The so-called "global world" is a Western, mainly American construct, in the shaping of which Muslims have played no part.

In practice, the "global" idea could go in many different directions. It could degenerate into a new version of the positivist creed, which would mean embarking on a universal wild-goose chase. Or it could become an instrument for providing the economically and militarily weaker societies with the means they need not only to survive but also to strengthen their identity in the context of a pluralist world. Islam should look into its historic, cultural, and intellectual resources to find, and use, energies needed either to offer an alternative model or to become an active participant in developing the one proposed by the West. The choice is not between being an object of globalization or its enemy.

The mere verbal rejection of globalization, while accepting all its imperatives in practice, is a sign only of intellectual laziness. To try to challenge it by violent action, without competing with it in the field of ideas, amounts to decadent formalism, of which we saw an example in the attacks launched by the al Qaeda gang against the United States on September 11, 2001.

There we had action presented as a substitute for thought in the manner of Voltaire's bug. (That bug, annoyed by the tick-tock of the clock, committed suicide by jumping at it, stopping the "infernal machine" for a fraction of a second.)

The blame game

Any serious debate on where Islam is today and where it needs to be tomorrow must start with an end to the demagogic blame game. Some speakers put the blame on the usual suspects of modern Islamic mythology: the Crusaders, the Orientalists, the Imperialists, the Zionists, the Communists, the liberals, the secularists, and so on. They did not realize that by identifying any of those usual suspects as author of the Islamic predicament they were absolving generations of Muslim intellectual and political leaders of their share of responsibility. They were not prepared even to discuss the tragic failure of such supposedly "Islamic" systems as we have witnessed in Iran, the Sudan and Afghanistan (under the Taliban) in the past three decades.

Others, including Prime Minister Mahatir, introduced a new whipping boy: the ulema (theologians). But they ignored the fact that the ulema have been as much the victims of despotism in Muslim countries as any other social stratum. Saddam Hussein's system was not created by the ulema. The Iraqi dictator killed thousands of clerics and virtually destroyed the theological centers of learning in Iraq. The Taliban were semi-literate peasants who slaughtered the traditional ulema of Afghanistan. Even in Iran, the ulema have suffered more than any other social group.

Today, there are more mullahs and students of theology in prison in Iran than any other social group. As for the Sudan, the ruling military junta has never allowed the ulema any share in power.

Western ideologies

A case could be argued that the tragedies that the Muslim world has suffered in the past 150 years were a result not of any action by the ulema but of despotism in which the military, the self-styled peddlers of Western ideologies, such as nationalism and Communism, and sections of the urban middle classes, were in the driving seat. The ulema may come up with any number of ideas and concepts that one might find wrong, weird or even dangerous. But the way to counter them is in the marketplace of ideas.

Once we have set aside the blame game we should acknowledge the existence of politics, economics, and ethics as domains distinct from that of theology. This does not mean atheism, or even secularism, as some self-styled defenders of Islam claim. Nor does it mean that theology cannot, or should not, make its own intellectual contribution to those domains. What it means is that political, economic, and ethical issues cannot be defined, analyzed, understood, and answered in purely theological terms.

Distinct domains

The denial of those distinct domains has enabled despots and demagogues of various ideological shades to invent a theopolitical discourse that prevents any rational discussion of the problems the Muslims face today.

Once we have set aside the theopolitical discourse we could acknowledge the distinction between Islam as a faith, and Islam as an existential reality. This would enable us to subject Islam, as an existential reality, that is to say the way it is practiced and lived, to rational and systematic criticism aimed at discovering its weaknesses and suggesting ways to correct them. In that way any critique of the way we live as Muslims can no longer be condemned as a critique of Islam as a faith and thus presented as a religious dividing line.

The tragic irony is that classical Islam did recognize the existence of domains distinct from theology.

*...see **Muslim scholars debate** p. 16*

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides

Attack of the Crawls

My breakdown started in the middle of April. Situated as we are halfway between Chicago and St.Louis, we are stuck in hockey purgatory. We're not close enough to either city to get regular hockey games on t.v. I was able to grit my teeth and persevere through the endless cycles of NASCAR and truck pulls, but when the NHL playoffs started with the Canucks in them and I couldn't get any games on t.v., I finally had a complete mental breakdown.

All for the love of hockey

I called the cable company and signed up for the "adventure" cable package, an upgrade from the "classic" package with the usual networks. It was ESPN I was looking for. They were the ones showing the early playoff games. At first, I enjoyed the commentary and coverage. It wasn't Hockey Night in Canada but it was hockey. I could handle that they didn't show the national anthems and that they timed the advertising so that every possible pause in the play was filled with a commercial break. At least I got to see the games.

But then the "crawls" started — those words that move across the screen during a program. You see them on other networks like CNN. The bottom tenth of the screen is filled with a continuous stream of graphics and text. On ESPN, the crawls were about the latest news in sports: important player trades, basketball playoff updates, recent football player drug convictions, etc. In one corner of the screen was the channel's identification icon. Somewhere wedged in the middle was the game.

I became increasingly unsettled by all the activity on the screen. Once in a while, the crawl told the viewers to log on to such and such a website to get more information about a certain player or team or to answer a sports trivia question. Other crawls told us to make sure we tuned into a reality show or made-for-tv-movie coming up in the near future. Meanwhile, there was a hockey game being played.

Unending information

How did this happen? How do we allow networks to drive us crazy with distracting and unsettling things like this? I've heard of people who have resorted to covering up the bottom of the screen with black paper so they don't have to deal with all the nonsense.

The beauty about sports is that it's both a passive and active thing to watch. We can sit back and let the images come to us or we can really get into the game and yell at the screen, stand on the furniture, or threaten the refs. Suddenly now, the t.v. is talking back and telling me what to log on to, watch, and buy. This kind of sports broadcast seems to be more about providing unending information than it is about experiencing the sport.

I feel like an old person lamenting the speed of the world. Apparently, research shows that most younger t.v. viewers like the extra graphics and crawls that are now being added to programs. The Internet generation likes t.v. that operates as if it's in cyberspace. I can see that people don't mind it on CNN. After all, they want news. But when you're watching the Senators and the Devils play for the Eastern Conference final, do you really want extra info on who scored an overtime goal for the Hartford Whalers 18 years ago today?

I'm a busy person (as are most people), and I often pray for contentment and a peaceful heart. But so many things demand attention. It'd just be nice to watch a hockey game without little flashing lights and moving words telling me what to do.

Tim Antonides is a teacher and sports coach currently studying in Chicago, Illinois.

Review

Christian drama at the Fringe

by Sonya Vanderveen-Feddema

From July 4-13 Sara Weber, 28, performed her play, "On the Roof," at Toronto's Fringe Theatre Festival. According to the festival's program booklet, the first Toronto Fringe Festival took place in 1989 with 30 performing companies in 4 theatres. This year 125 independent theatre companies from across Canada and around the world presented their plays to 50,000 people for 12 days in 20 venues. The festival received 396 applications from artists wanting to participate. To Weber's great surprise, she was accepted.

A comedy about cancer

Billed a "comedy about cancer, cribbage, and floating slowly down denial," Weber's play tells the story of her mother's struggle with cancer. Written and performed honestly and poignantly, without falling into the too common trap of sentimentalizing the deceased's character, Weber allows her audience to experience the gut-wrenching emotional, spiritual, and physical reality of cancer. She grabs her audience's attention, as they swing between tears of sadness and hoots of laughter, and reveals what she learned about the human body (imminent death has a distinct smell), what she experienced in her Presbyterian church community (people help each other during bad times), and what she struggled with spiritually ("Would we pass this test of endurance and faith?").

Born and raised in Madison, Alabama, Weber enrolled at Redeemer University College in Ontario and graduated in May 1997 with a B.A. in theatre and English. She returned to Madison after graduating.

"This is a story I will tell"

Weber kept a journal chronicling the years from November 1997, when her mother was first diagnosed with lung cancer, through the grieving period after her death on May 20, 2000. In March 2003 Weber began to write "On the Roof" after her application to the Toronto and Vancouver Fringe Festivals was accepted. She based it almost completely on her journal entries. Weber says, "Even during the last week of my mother's life, I remember looking around the waiting room as various events happened, and thinking, 'This is a story I will tell some day.'" Though she wrote down what she and her family experienced, she says, "All I know was that I never really expected her to die, until she was dead. And then, what a shock!"

Weber claims that the play was initially not difficult to write because her journal was already filled with stories. Her first draft consisted of 27 pages, translating into a 2 1\2 hour performance. That's when her hard work began.

"The difficult part was cutting it back to 13 pages (for a 55 minute performance) because that is all the festivals would allow," she explains.

Ray Louter, professor of drama at Redeemer University College and director of "On the Roof," helped Weber reduce the length of the play. She says, "Ray would gently say, 'I think we need to cut this story' and I would say, 'I have to think about it.' Then I would go home and cry, and come back and say 'You're right.' I didn't know I would be so emotional when I had to cut out some stories."

Risky to overtly express faith

Weber's Christian faith clearly shines through "On the Roof." Previously, she thought it was risky to overtly express her faith in a play. "I thought people would think I was being didactic or preachy," she explains, "so I thought the best thing I could do was to leave out God altogether if I wanted to perform." However, she soon changed her mind. "This winter I came to the conclusion that there was no way I could write the story of my mom's illness and leave out our faith. Our belief in God and his healing power and mercy is the only way we survived this. I knew I wouldn't be true to the story if I left that out. Once I figured that out, I got accepted into three festivals, right in a row."

Performing "On the Roof" has been more challenging than anything Weber has done previously. She has performed in several Redeemer University College productions — *The Shunning*, *Threepenny Opera*, and *The Real Inspector Hound* — and in *An Inspector Calls* with Theater Huntsville in her hometown. She was also involved in a community theatre in Caledonia in April 1999 and last summer performed in OTIS at the Toronto Fringe Theater Festival.

But since "On the Roof" is her story, Weber says, "I can barely eat and my nervous stomach is out of control before I go on. Once I'm on stage, I relax. I often think

the best plays I see or read are those that come from a true life experience."

When asked by Christian Courier if writing and performing the play has helped her through her grieving process, Weber answers, "Not at all!" She explains, "I don't think anybody would want to see my grieving process on stage. It consisted of me laying face down, bawling my eyes out. Only because I have already grieved could I tell this story."

Weber hopes that her play will help others as they grieve for or remember parents who have died. The greatest compliment she receives after performing "On the Roof," she says, is when people come up to her afterward and tell her their own stories. If I she had her way, people would be invited to come one at a time into her dressing room to relate their stories. "I did this show three days at Redeemer," she says, "and afterward we had a discussion in which audience members were given a chance to talk. So many shared their stories. All night I could have sat listening to them. It was so sad and beautiful at the same time."

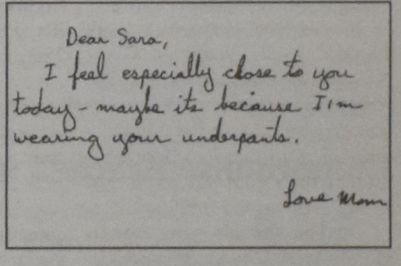
More performances

Later this summer and in the fall, Weber will perform "On the Roof" in London, Ontario (August 9-17) and in Vancouver, B.C. (September 6-14). Interested readers can check her web site, www.ontheroof.ca, for details about time and location. After Vancouver and London, she hopes to perform her play many times again — possibly for grief support groups or in theaters.

Weber aspires to eventually make a living performing in professional theaters all over Canada and the U.S. "I hope 'On the Roof' is just a stepping stone that will lead me to other roles," she says. Also, in a few months she'd like to begin writing a play for several actors.

For now, even as she shares her story of grief, pain, and laughter, Weber says, "I am so thankful that I no longer wake up with that heavy feeling in my heart that my mom is dead. I now wake up and am so thankful that I had her for 25 years, and her humor and love remain with me daily."

Actual note from Sara's Mom:



Sara Weber with her mother's four sisters

Agencies work to stave off disaster in Ethiopia

On the shores of scenic Lake Tana, in northern Ethiopia, young people are learning how to improve food production through urban garden plots. The training they receive may one day hold the key for the food security of Ethiopia, a land known for its natural beauty, its monasteries and its droughts.

Memories of the famine that claimed nearly 1 million lives in the mid-1980s are still fresh in this country with an ancient Orthodox Christian heritage. And, once again, Ethiopia is faced with serious food shortages in the wake of two consecutive years of drought. An estimated 12,5 million people are said to be in immediate need of food aid, provoking a growing humanitarian response on the part of governments and relief agencies.

"Africa's people face tremendous need because of food shortages that threaten millions," said Constantine M. Triantafilou, director of International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). "Food insecurity remains Ethiopia's most deep-rooted problem.... Of the country's 67.2 million inhabitants, almost half live in deep and long-term poverty and are vulnerable to drought, acute malnutrition and even, at extreme moments, to starvation."

Factors affecting famine

So far, outright famine has been averted, but concerns over a shortfall in food grain donations. About 1.3 million tons are required through December. Exacerbating Ethiopia's food shortage is the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Other factors in Ethiopia's food crisis include its war with neighboring Eritrea, the failure of the two rainy seasons in 2002, the lack of top soil, and poor land management. Ethiopians cultivate farmland that in many cases is not owned by them.

"There's no guarantee that their heirs will get the same land, so they don't have much incentive to take care of it or work to avoid land degradation," said an IOCC worker. "Even with massive amounts of food aid, you still have to reform the agriculture system and do more integrated rural development before they have sufficient food security."

In December 2002, the members of the Coalition for Food Aid, an alliance of U.S.-based relief agencies, launched a campaign to raise awareness about the food crisis in Africa in the "Baltimore Declaration" on Africa.

The IOCC began implementing small-scale agriculture projects in the northern Amhara region in 2001, in partnership with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission. The monastery-based projects seek to improve people's ability to support themselves through agricultural pursuits such as beekeeping, gravity-flow irrigations systems, fruit orchards and vegetable gardens.

Christianity in Ethiopia dates back to the fourth century. Today, as many as 30 million Ethiopians -- about 45 percent of the population -- are members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

IOCC has also proposed a vocational and agricultural training program in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, on the shore of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile. The project proposed by IOCC will train young people in new agricultural techniques, food production and animal husbandry, as well as woodworking and other trades. An agricultural extension service to surrounding rural areas also is planned.

"We're trying to prevent future famines in Ethiopia by training young farmers in better production techniques, for both crops and livestock," said IOCC consultant Dirk Van Gorp. "We're working toward the future.

[Harry der Nederlanden from information provided by the IOCC, the humanitarian aid agency of Orthodox Christians.]

Vatican builds biggest middle east church in Jordan

By Stefan J. Bos

JORDAN (ANS) — The Vatican will build the biggest church of the Middle East in Jordan near the site where scholars believe Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist.

Last week the first group of Vatican engineers arrived to inspect the location of the 5,000 square meters complex, which will be erected in a pyramid shape on the east bank of the Jordan River.

The church, which also includes a monastery and even an indoor lake for Baptism services, is to be constructed from old stones used in Biblical times and can accommodate 30,000 pilgrims.

Although the Vatican will fund the multi-million dollar building and a yet unknown number of priests and monks are expected to live there permanently, "believers from all denominations will be welcomed and can be baptized in the church," says Dia Al-Madani, director of the site.

"Construction of the church will begin this autumn and could be finished within three years," he says. The Baptism Site was officially opened in 2001 as part of the world-wide Great Jubilee celebrations.

Archaeologists have long believed the east bank of the Jordan river could reveal the Baptism Site and Bethany, the place where John the Baptist is said to have lived. However Jordan's four decades of state of war with neighboring Israel changed the area into a frontline with land mines littering the landscape, making further investigations impossible.

After late King Hussein signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994 accompanied by a process of demilitarization on the Jordan site of the Jordan river, archaeological excavations began in 1996 as part of the kingdom's plan to attract tourists to the Baptism Site.

Compromise Reached in Vietnam Church Dispute

The Thu Thiem congregation in Ho Chi Minh City has persisted in finishing construction of its new church building despite a police order in early June halting work at the site (see "Police halt church construction," CC July 28, p.2). Pastor Truong Van Nganh and his congregation began worshiping in the new sanctuary in early July, even though officials of Nganh's denomination had advised him that the government wanted him to "temporarily stop meeting in the church."

City authorities then invited congregational leaders to an unprecedented meeting on July 10. Officials of the Bureau of Religious Affairs admitted that local government offices had not expeditiously processed the church's request for a building permit.

Pastor Nganh, in turn, admitted he began the building project before the final approval on land use. The mutual admissions opened the way for compromise and resulted in the church being granted permission to continue meeting on the site.

In remote areas of Vietnam, however, to which foreign journalists and consulate officials are not allowed access, government authorities do not typically exercise this type of restraint. Since Christmas of 2002, officials in the Dak Lak province have destroyed five chapels belonging to congregations of the Mnong minority and ordered all Mnong churches there to disband.

PHOTOS RETRIEVED JULY 29, 2003, FROM THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD FOUNDATION. <WWW.PEOPLESOFTHEWORLD.ORG/TEXT?PEOPLE=MNONG>

India: Christians fear anti-conversion law for Kerala State

India (Christian Aid) – Christians are worried that the south Indian state of Kerala may be in danger of joining five other Indian states in passing an anti-conversion law.

Jaya Lalitha, the chief minister of neighboring state Tamil Nadu, is a woman fierce in her promotion of Hinduism. After facilitating the passing of an anti-conversion law in Tamil Nadu she threatened to visit Kerala to press for a similar law there. Even though she has not yet made the trip, Christians are still worried that such a law could be passed, since similar laws have been passed in five states: Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, and most recently Tamil Nadu.

Ram Madhav, an RSS (National Volunteer Society – a strongly Hindu nationalistic movement) spokesman, said in June that the laws were necessary because the activities of missionaries have led to tensions threatening "peace and harmony." At the same time he said the conversion activities of the VHP (World Hindu Council) and other Hindu bodies did not create a problem because these were just calling people to a Hindu "homecoming."

Under the anti-conversion laws, it is illegal to offer inducements or force anyone to convert. The fact that there is no record of forced conversions to Christianity and that the only forced conversions (or "reversions") are by Hindus making Christian converts "revert" back to Hinduism does not affect these Hindu zealots. Their intent seems to be to stop the spread of Christianity and further the influence of Hinduism.

Already these laws have emboldened radical Hindus in their persecution of Christians. In Karnataka state, just to the north of Kerala, opponents to the gospel recently sent a warning to all pastors and preachers in the area, saying that no one should conduct Christian prayer meetings anywhere in public or "serious action" would be taken.

As the threat of political action looms over Kerala, indigenous believers are praying for God's intervening hand.

To learn how you can strengthen the roles of native missionaries in India, write insider@christianaid.org and put MI-429 600-PERS on the subject line.

Church

Kenya: Muslim tensions rise and churches burn

By Elizabeth Kendal

On July 13, Muslims rioting over the arrest of one of their clerics torched five churches in Bura, Tana River district, not far from Mombasa in Kenya. Of great concern to Christians in Kenya is the fact that no one has been charged over the burning of the churches. Christian leaders are still waiting to see if the arsonists will receive justice or impunity. As impunity equals permission, this is a serious issue of national significance at a time when Muslim tensions are rising to boiling point.

Church burnings

Rev. Simon K. Mungumba, the Assistant Chairman of the Bura Pastors' Fellowship, writes (14 June) that on the evening of June 12 2003, when the Divisional Officer (DO) was passing through Manyatta with some security officers, some Orma and Somali youths started stoning them, forcing them to retreat into their vehicle and flee.

The DO returned the following morning to inquire why they had been attacked. The Imam told him that there was a visiting preacher in town and the youth feared the officers had come to arrest him.

The visiting preacher, Sheikh Khalifa Mutiso, is a former Christian pastor who converted to Islam and now preaches aggressively against Christianity and Christians, with offensive messages that "border on incitement."

When the DO decided to take Mutiso in for questioning, once again he and his officers were pelted with stones. The attack became so violent that the police fired their weapons into the air to disperse the rioters. When that did not help, the DO arrested Mutiso and took him away for police questioning.

At that point the Muslim rioters stoned the police station and went on to burn and loot the churches while others chanted, "Release our sheikh!" The rioting lasted from the arrest at 9:00 a.m. until Mutiso was released at the intervention of a local MP.

There is little shade in Bura, so in an act of great solidarity and generosity, the Catholic Church provided tents for all of the churches that were burned down.

The local Imams say they do not know Sheikh Mutiso; however, Christian leaders identified him as a preacher known for stirring up Muslim youths, most of them school age children and teenagers.

Much is cooking in Kenya

Kenya is 78.6 percent Christian and 6-8 percent Muslim. This incident with Sheikh Mutiso and the burned churches is only one of several issues in the pot – under which the heat is rising. This is why it is imperative that the Kenyan government deal decisively with religious violence.

Kenyan Muslims are pushing to increase the power and influence of Kenya's Kadhi (Islamic) Courts. Muslims want the Kadhi courts to be fully entrenched in the new Constitution with national rather than just local jurisdiction.

Christians maintain that the entrenchment of Kadhi Courts in the constitution, elevating them to national level and giving them authority equal to the state's secular courts, will compromise Article 10 of the constitution, which states that, "The State shall treat all religions equally."

Muslims maintain that they will accept nothing less than the entrenchment of the courts in the constitution and some Muslims unfortunately have made inflammatory threats to establish a separate Islamic state if the Kadhi Courts are not accepted.

Terror arrests

On Monday June 23, four Kenyan residents were brought before the judge in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, to face murder charges. They have been in detention since March 2003 on suspicion of harboring the terrorists who carried out the car-bomb attack on the Israeli-owned beachfront Paradise Hotel near Mombasa November 2002 that killed 18 people.

The charges against the four were the latest in a string of anti-terror measures. Some 80 Muslims are currently detained on suspicion of terror links.

Muslims are outraged by the arrests, saying that they are being used as scapegoats and that the cases are unduly influenced by foreign (USA, CIA) interference, pressure and funding. Kenyan Muslim politicians and clerics believe that Kenya's proposed Anti-terrorism Bill abuses the rights of Kenyan Muslims. (Three MPs from the ruling NARC party have crossed the floor to support the opposition in this, and several lawyers are saying that it violates the constitution.)

Muslim leaders have threatened to form their own political party. At a public rally in Mombasa on Sunday June 29, Islamic speakers "blasted the Government for what they termed harassment of Muslims after branding them terror suspects on the whims of America and Israel." One of the Muslim leaders warned, "The way things are going on today, civil strife is looming."

[Shortened version of a story by Elizabeth Kendal, researcher for the World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission.]

Polish churches under "police surveillance"

By Stefan J. Bos

GDANSK (ANS) –Several churches in what is the world famous birthplace of the anti-Communist trade union and political movement Solidarity have been put under police surveillance.

"Secret instructions" are issued to police forces to follow and investigate "religious minorities" including Baptists, Adventists and Pentecostals in the Polish city of Gdansk, reported Polish media and Forum 18 News (F18News).

"These instructions are absolutely unacceptable, like something from the communist part of our history," said Andrzej Seweryn, the Warsaw based president of the Baptist Union, in an interview with F18News, a news agency specialized in religious persecution.

"They are against the law and the constitution and against our status as a legal union," he added.

Members followed

In February the chief of the Crime Prevention Department of the police in the Gdansk region instructed local police leaders to draw up a list of religious minority organizations in their district, with data on their members broken down by age and sex.

Named in the instruction were several Christian churches – among them Baptists, Pentecostals and Adventists – and other religious organizations, such as Jehovah's Witnesses.

In addition to legally recognized denominations, therapeutic and non-conventional medicine groups, as well as clairvoyants and fortune tellers were mentioned.

"The instruction indicated that the police monitoring is to be undertaken in cooperation with organizations and institutions involved in similar activities," F18 News revealed.

Police visit Pentecostals

Two Pentecostal facilities in the region – a church and a retreat centre – have already been visited by police, Tomasz Ropiejko, pastor of a Pentecostal church in Gdansk, told F18 News.

"They asked questions about what went on at the centre, what events were planned and whether a youth event was planned for this year as was held last year."

However several police officials have defended the actions, saying that Christians have nothing to fear. "The police are only interested in criminal matters, crime prevention and security," said Slawomir Cisowski, spokesman for the national police headquarters in Warsaw.

Police have indicated they are especially interested in what they call "sects".

However, Adventists have already sent an open protest to Interior Minister Krzysztof Janik, and asked whether the Gdansk police are also planning files for a Catholic religious group.

Poland is a mainly Catholic nation, which is seeking European Union membership in 2004, while also maintaining close ties to the United States.

Stefan J. Bos is a reporter with F18News, a news agency specialized in religious persecution, and Eastern Europe Correspondent for ASSIST News Service.

Every African is a potential refugee

"Given the fragile nature of many of our socio-political realities, it could be said, prophetically, that every African living on the continent is a potential refugee," said Rev.Tilewa Johnson,

The chairman of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) Continental Committee on Uprooted People was speaking at the commemoration of World Refugee Day in Nairobi on June 20.

Declaring the day as one of the single most important days in the calendar of Africa, Rev. Tilewa noted that the continuous hardship faced by uprooted people in Africa were painful lessons that reminded Christians that they had an obligation to stand and speak with a prophetic voice in tackling the endless root causes of "uprootedness" in the continent.

Rev. Tilewa pointed out that Africa has 13.5 million internally displaced persons out of a global total of 25 million. He appealed to the entire ecumenical movement in the world to collectively speak against root causes of uprootedness in Africa, where the number of uprooted people continues to rise by the day.

Harry der Nederlanden with files from Joseph K'Amolo of the AANA.

SaltShaker evangelism

RIVER FOREST, Ill. (EP) - July 2003 marks the release of *SaltShaker Resources*, an evangelism tool-kit of sorts, consisting of four slimline books written by Rebecca Manley Pippert. Described by Chuck Colson as one of the "liveliest and most effective communicators in the world today," Pippert is perhaps best known among Christians for her contemporary classic, *Out of the Saltshaker*. Pippert is incorporating national evangelism conferences in this new SaltShaker Ministries phenomenon. At these SaltShaker Conferences, Pippert, as always, seeks to focus on "knowing Christ and making Him known." More specifically though, Pippert highlights "seeker Bible studies" as a way to effectively reach people for Christ. She says, from first-hand experience, "These groups are a safe place for seekers to learn about Christ. You meet Jesus when you do a Bible study." The first conference was held in Chicago during January 2003.

Benjamin Osei: from Ghana with love

Chris Pullenayegem

Ben is living out the promise he made in Africa – in Toronto. Deep in rebel held territory, at the mercy of some of the most feared and treacherous tribes in Sierra Leone, Ben made a promise – to God. If ever he was to get out alive, Ben vowed to give himself in total service to God. It was the only thing he had left to live for. A week before his capture by the rebels, Ben had lost his wife and two precious sons in a rebel ambush. The story of Benjamin's deliverance and journey since then has been as complex and as long as the route that took to get him from Africa to Canada.

Benjamin Osei with neighborhood children

Breaking Bread

Benjamin Osei was born in Ghana but moved to Sierra Leone in childhood. He had many dreams. One of them was to become a successful businessman and use his knowledge and experience to help poorer people from the community to develop their skills to achieve self-sufficiency. Ben's dream was realized when he opened a bakery, which quickly became famous for the quality of its products and service. Ben's bread became a household name, and he soon became known in the community as a generous and caring person. His successful venture afforded employment to many youth, who regarded Ben as their mentor and, indeed, a father figure.

Predictably however, human greed and jealousy brought a tragic turn around in his fortunes. Rebels who had killed his family now wanted him to bake bread for them in their camp. Inside the camp Ben was subjected to daily threats and inhuman treatment until he managed to escape from their clutches and turn himself in to the Sierra Leone soldiers for protection. Instead of granting him refuge, however, the soldiers detained and accused him of being a rebel sympathizer. They tortured him mercilessly to obtain strategic information about the rebels and their camp from him. Many times during those terrible days, driven by extreme emotional and physical pain, Benjamin came close to taking his own life. He was thwarted only by an inner voice prompting him to resist. In desperation Benjamin often cried to God for deliverance, and he promised that he would dedicate his life totally to him, if ever he were to escape from this hell. When he was about to be executed (shot in front of a mass grave), one of the officers, whom Ben had taught in school, agreed to help him escape if, in return, Ben transferred all his possessions and assets over to him. He did.

Ben managed to return to Ghana for medical treatment and made plans to leave the country, for he faced the constant risk of being captured and perhaps even being killed. With whatever assistance he was able to find, Benjamin escaped and arrived in Canada as an asylum seeker. With his desire to return to his country and serve as strong as ever, Benjamin enrolled in a MDiv program at Arcadia University, which he completed in four years. Ben returned to Ghana with the intention of teaching in a Bible school and establishing a skill training centre for displaced refugees in Ghana. Much to his dismay, however, he found that the rebels he had escaped from in Sierra Leone were still looking for him and, worse still, had expanded their reach to Ghana as well.

An unwanted guest

Fearing that he would be picked up by the rebels again, Benjamin again fled to Canada, leaving his second wife, now with child, behind, hoping that they would all be reunited in the safety of Canada.

Benjamin filed a refugee claim in1999. The claim was refused based on a decision made with little regard to his personal circumstance.

Today, Benjamin faces the risk of deportation by Immigration Canada to Ghana, where he is sure to come face-to-face with his former captors. Life will be extremely uncertain for Ben. Just recently through the intervention of churches and other institutions in the Jane-Finch area, a deportation order issued by Immigration Canada against Benjamin was deferred until his claim for permanent residence based on Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds is decided. We pray that the outcome of this will be positive or else Benjamin will be left with hardly any options.

The least of these

Ben's servant heart knew no boundaries when he came to Canada. He quickly found avenues to serve people around him and endeared himself to all who were fortunate to know this gentle and deeply committed man. Not satisfied to sit and wait, Benjamin, hearing about the problems and issues facing the Jane-Finch community in Toronto, decided to give expression to his faith by living and ministering in this area. He moved to Toronto and lived in a shared apartment in the community stigmatized by its high incidence of crime, poverty and related social issues. In spite of a physically demanding job at a factory, Benjamin, with his smile and humble approach, reached out to, and was able to relate to, a number of kids on the streets. Benjamin became a familiar figure riding his bicycle on Jane Street, sometimes in zero temperature, stopping often to talk to kids hanging out on the streets. Many of these kids are from single-parent homes, mostly headed by mothers who have little time for them, being busy just trying to make ends meet.

Ben hardly had any free moments for himself as these kids grew in number and sought him out at odd times of the day and night to be their friend and mentor. Often they waited for him to return from work outside his apartment door and he talked with them for hours into the night. Although Ben missed his family back in Ghana and wished they could be with him in Canada, he often comments that he has a ready-made extended family, which doesn't seem to stop growing.

When paths converge

Meanwhile, the Lord in his sovereign plan and quite unknown to Benjamin, had prompted Friendship Community Church (FCC) to begin a community outreach program aimed at the youth in this same community three years prior. Out of this was born a youth soccer program which catered to many young boys in the Jane-Finch community. The program gave those who participated a deep sense of worth and kept them off the streets, most of them graduating to go to college or university. FCC, however, did not have the resource to expand this program. They could find no one who lived in the area willing to lead the program, and they lacked funds to staff the program.

In desperation and a deep desire to see God continue to work in the community through the larger Christian community, FCC approached Youth Unlimited (Youth for Christ) in Toronto in the hope that they would partner. Only a week earlier, Benjamin had approached Youth Unlimited to ask if there was an opportunity to work particularly in the Jane-Finch area.

What has happened since is a testimony to Gods providence and grace.

Benjamin now heads the ministry on a full-time basis and has already expanded the program to include girls and other sports such as basketball. He recently had to cap the number of participants as there were more kids than he could manage. The needs are many and challenging. Kids come from fractured family relationships, economically impoverished backgrounds and, even worse, are often stereotyped as worthless and a burden to society.

Ben is working by faith, as he has to raise his own support. The very act of giving up his full-time job for a ministry calling with no guaranteed income is a tremendous testimony to his character and his passion for lost souls. He not only has himself to support, but has three mouths to feed back in Ghana as well.

With the constant threat of being deported by Immigration Canada ever present, Benjamin cannot be in a worse place by worldly standards. But that's not the way God nor Benjamin sees it. This is spiritual warfare. The community needs him, and we, the church, the body of Christ, should shoulder arms with him to serve these marginalized people in love.

We are family

Fred Witteween, the pastor of FCC with Youth Unlimited and four other churches in the community are working with Benjamin's ministry to lead the initiative for greater inter-denominational work in the Jane-Finch area, seeking to involve many other churches as well. Just recently a commissioning service was held for Benjamin in which four churches in the area joined to "send" him in the Lord's strength to the community. The funding for Benjamin's ministry is still a concern, but both Ben and the partner organizations base the ministry on the faith paradigm: "If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat".

We invite anyone who wants to join us on this journey to contact us and find out how to become involved in his ministry. Contact: Fred Witteveen /Benjamin Osei Friendship Community Church Tel: 416 661 7932/416 245 6240

Chris Pullenayegem is Refugee Issues Coordinator at Citizens for Public Justice and worship leader at Friendship Community Church, Toronto. Chris was interim director of the FCC community youth program in 2002.

Christian Living

GETTING UNSTUCK
Arlene Van Hove

Blooming boldly outside the pot

How does the meadow-flower its bloom unfold?
Because the lovely little flower is free
Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold.
- William Wordsworth

The warmth of summer allows us to enjoy a more leisurely pace of life. For some of us our usual over-committed hurried pace is replaced with casual strolls along lakes or seashores as well as in vibrant gardens awash in bright seasonal colors. Others may enjoy challenging hikes along winding trails and steep mountaintops.

At the same time, colorful masses of tumbling blooms spill abundantly from hanging baskets and window boxes complimenting our cities, towns and homes. In short, the sights and sounds of summer can be delectable food for the soul!

Seasonal shifts

The change in seasons is more noticeable in the northern hemisphere. We experience marked differences in climate between fall, winter, spring and summer. In the tropics the shifts in seasons are subtler. Fall and winter may only bring more greying clouds and cooler winds, resulting in minor temperature changes.

And so it is with our psychosocial development over the life span. Sometimes the shifts are subtle and sometimes they are more noticeable – as it is with Trevor and Jill.

Trevor has been retired for eight months now and continues to feel lethargic. For forty years he has put a lot of energy into his work. He is a committed husband and father. He is married to Jill for thirty years. They love each other very much but for a long time have been unhappy about their lack of communication skills.

Trevor and Jill spend a lot of time in each other's company and, as they try to adapt to retirement, their shortcomings in this area are obvious. Both of them want to enjoy this time together; yet most of their discussions become arguments, which cause further hurt and angry feelings. They are confused about what is going on and do not understand why their persistence does not pay off.

Locked into raw effort and determination

I hand them a copy of a story out of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, which I mentioned briefly in one of my previous columns – and will reprint it in its entirety – because it has been helpful to many people. The author, Price Pritchett writes: *I'm sitting in a quiet room at the Milcroft Inn, a peaceful little place hidden back among the pine trees about an hour out of Toronto. It's just past noon, late July, and I'm listening to the desperate sounds of a life-or-death struggle going on a few feet away.*

There's a small fly burning out the last of its short life's energies in a futile attempt to fly through the glass of the windowpane. The whining wings tell the poignant story of the fly's strategy: Try harder.

But it is not working.

The frenzied effort offers no hope for survival. Ironically, the struggle is part of the trap. It is impossible for the fly to try hard enough to succeed at breaking through the glass. Nevertheless, this little insect has staked its life on reaching its goal through raw effort and determination.

This fly is doomed. It will die there on the windowsill.

Across, the room, ten steps away, the door is open. Ten seconds of flying time and this small creature could reach the outside world it seeks. With only a fraction of the effort now being wasted, it could be free of this self-imposed trap. The breakthrough possibility is there. It would be so easy.

Why doesn't the fly try another approach, something dramatically different? How did it get locked in on the idea that this particular route and determined effort offer the most promise for success? What logic is there in continuing until death to seek a breakthrough with more of the same?

PHOTO COURTESY OF A. VAN HOVE

No doubt this approach makes sense to the fly. Regrettably, it's an idea that will kill.

Trying harder isn't necessarily the solution to achieving more. It may not offer any real promise for getting what you want out of life. Sometimes, in fact, it's a big part of the problem.

If you stake your hopes for a breakthrough on trying harder than ever, you may kill your chances for success.

Outside the comfortable pot

And so, Trevor and Jill may want to take a good look at their interpersonal dynamics. At the same time, it may be helpful for them to know the pain of remaining in their old patterns will be more painful over the long run than the pain of trying to do things differently! While healthy change takes perseverance and commitment, it can enrich their relationship and bring it to a new depth for the remainder of their lives.

A previously troubled couple on the road to healing recently said: "If we did not honestly look at our vulnerabilities we would never have experienced the depth and strength of our relationship. Neither would we have been able to appreciate the grace we extended to one another through our faith in God. Nor would we have realized we can, at times, bloom through facing challenges which in turn sets us free from worrying about the small stuff, allowing us to more often see the importance of the big picture."

Like the fly that could find freedom through the open door, we can challenge ourselves to begin to do something differently so that we can become "free down to its root" as the above William Wordsworth poem suggests. When we are able to do that we allow our unique "bloom to unfold – boldly."

Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.

Jesus Christ is end of all, and the centre to which all tends. Whoever knows Him knows the reason of everything.... Blaise Pascal

Peaceful means

...continued from page 5

As well, our own government and we as citizens should listen to prophets of peace who have proclaimed and practiced paths of non-violence.

"When I despair," said Mahatma Gandhi, "I remember that throughout history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible. But in the end they always fall. Think of it *always*.... Whenever you are in doubt that this is God's way – the way the world is meant to be. Think of that and then try to do his way."

Nelson Mandela, the former President of South Africa and now an Honourary Canadian Citizen, is a modern prophet for peace. His charismatic life and historic political witness (including 27 years in prison) has been, and continues to be, a powerful affirmation of public faith in action.

In his 1994 Inaugural Speech, Mandela declared: "We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our fears, our presence automatically liberates others."...

All opinion-shapers and political leaders must seriously reflect on King's, Gandhi's and Mandela's wise words of warning. I pray that they and our Canadian government will act for "regime change." The kind of change that, instead of war, spells transformation in national values and international priorities. The kind of change that concretely contributes to the practice of justice and peace for all peoples, without discrimination.

Pope John Paul II expressed ongoing concern for peace in Iraq. In his Easter message: "With the support of the international community, may the Iraq people become the protagonists of their collective rebuilding of their country... Let there be an end to the chain of hatred and terrorism, which threatens the orderly development of the human family. May God grant that we be free from the peril of the tragic clash between cultures and religions."

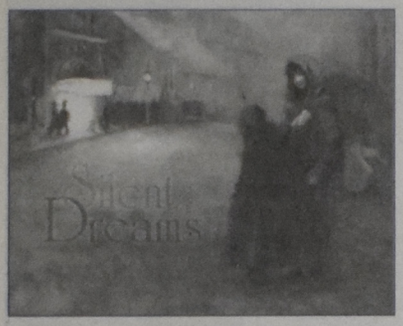
May the Spirit enable all of us, including our churches and governments to "pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means." As the apostle James reminds us so pointedly: "And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace." (Jas. 3:18)

Book Reviews

Dreams, hatred, heroes and saints

by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Silent Dreams
Written by Dandi Daley Mackall
Illustrated by Karen A. Jerome
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003.
Ages 5 and up



In the early 1900s, orphaned and homeless Camilla lives in a cardboard box with her aunt, whose "body just got up and left her mind." Each day Camilla looks forward to Saturday when she and her aunt attend silent movies. Day by day her anticipation builds as she begs, scrounges, and searches for enough coins to pay for their entrance fee. Once inside the theater, they escape into the story of the heroine, villain, and hero, forgetting their own harsh lives. Afterward by the river, they meet the other down-and-out street people and reenact the movie's tale. Despite being uprooted and destitute, the vagrants experience community as the story unfolds before them.

In author's notes, Mackall relates how, on a childhood trip to New York City, she received her first glimpse of a homeless person. Mackall's father asked her to introduce herself to the woman, who told them about her life as a hobo. That experience opened the author's eyes to realities of homelessness, and is the inspiration for this book.

The Enemy Has a Face
Written by Gloria D. Miklowitz
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003.
Ages 12 and up

Shortly after moving from Israel to Los Angeles, 14-year-old Netta's family is traumatized by the disappearance of her 17-year-old brother, Adam. Netta knows that Adam is dependable and trustworthy. She is convinced he wouldn't run away from home or cause his family worry by purposely not phoning home.

So, what happened to Adam?

A police detective who confers with the family asks if Adam has any enemies. Each member agrees that Adam is well-liked. Foul play can not be the reason for his disappearance.

However, when Netta tries to discover on her own what happened to her brother, she learns that some kids at his high school don't like him because of his heated discussions about the Middle East conflict. When Adam's friend takes Netta to an Arab-Israeli discussion group that Adam attended regularly, she encounters hostility toward her brother, as well as hatred between Israelis and Palestinians.

Throughout her search, Netta gets to know Laith al Salaam, a Palestinian boy from Ramallah, who is in America on a scholarship program. Their relationship fluctuates between recurring distrust and increasing understanding until they are finally able to relate to each other on the basis of their common humanity. When Netta discovers what happened to Adam, she faces her own prejudice, learning that it is no different than the intolerance she has for Palestinians.

The Enemy Has a Face is a timely novel permeated with insight into the futility of incessant conflicts, which lead to a recurring cycle of violence and hatred. Netta's father succinctly sums up the theme of the book: "We don't trust them. They don't trust us. They hate us. We hate them. Where will it end?"

Especially Heroes
Written by Virginia Kroll
Illustrated by Tim Ladwig
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003
Ages 9 and up

In 1962, during the civil rights movement, a girl in fourth grade learns about war heroes and religious martyrs who sacrificed for the causes they believed in. Her teacher's question rings in her ears after class is over: "Do you love anything so much that you would die for it?" After school she visits Mrs. Hall, her black next-door neighbor, who had become like a grandmother to her. The girl poses her teacher's question to Mrs. Hall. Mrs. Hall answers in the affirmative, but she doesn't tell the girl what she would be willing to die for. Later that day, hooligans attack Mrs. Hall's home, yelling racist remarks, breaking windows, and spray-painting her car with hate words. The girl's father and several other neighborhood men intervene, chasing off the juvenile delinquents. Mrs. Hall refuses to be intimidated into leaving her home. The girl understands that her father, the neighborhood men, and Mrs. Hall are heroes.

Especially Heroes is based on several incidents in author Kroll's life. With passion she shows children that in order for convictions to be authentic, they must be lived out even at great personal cost.

One Fine Day
Written by Elizabeth Van Steenwyk
Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2003.
All Ages

Wilbur and Orville Wright experimented, read, and thought until they began to understand the elements of flight. On Dec. 17, 1903 their work culminated in the flight of the first motor-powered airplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, changing the world forever. Told in the format of a radio play, One Fine Day acquaints children with the determined, brilliant Wright Brothers. It allows kids to experience the brothers' excitement at achieving their goal. Farnsworth's illustrations, painted with oil on linen, capture the brothers' intelligence, camaraderie, thoughtfulness, and jubilation. A helpful list of suggestions on how to make sound effects for the radio play is included.

Radiance Descending
Written by Paula Fox
New York: DK Publishing Inc., 1997.
Ages 11 and up

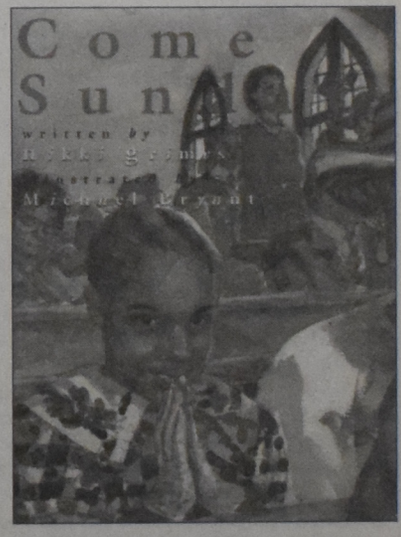
Eleven-year-old Paul has spent years trying not to think about his younger brother Jacob, born with Downs Syndrome. Paul is convinced that "Jacob is the only one among them who was unfinished." But soon he wonders: "Was not thinking about Jacob only another way of thinking about him?" After living in their new town for awhile, Paul's parents ask him to walk Jacob to the doctor for his allergy shots. Paul agrees to do so, but is reluctant because then everyone will see Jacob and know that they are brothers. He doesn't realize that everyone on Main Street already knows Jacob from previous trips to the doctor with his parents.

On Jacob's seventh birthday, Paul escapes to his forest hideout. Grandpa finds him and helps him understand that he really doesn't know Jacob. When they return home, Paul is shocked to discover all Jacob's friends from Main Street at the celebration. Paul's world shifts minutely as he sees Jacob in a new and radiant light.

Paula Fox has written an incredible story, filled with subtle emotions and layers of meaning. Readers will empathize with Paul as he experiences anger, rejection, fear, and finally, love. They will rejoice in Fox's message that no person is "damaged", and all are valuable.

Come Sunday
Written by nikki grimes (please note that she writes her name with lower case letters only)
Illustrated by Michael Bryant
Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996
Ages 5 to 8

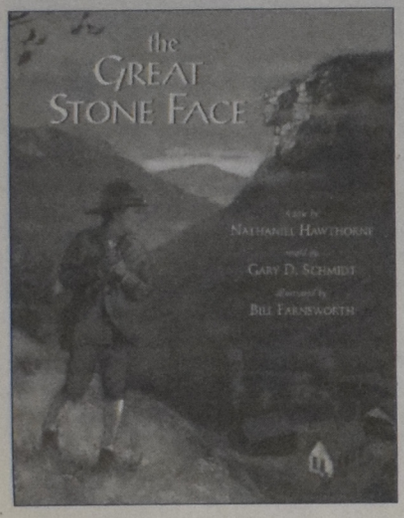
In this poetry collection, young readers meet LaTasha, a young Afro-American girl who loves Sunday worship services and fellowship at Paradise Baptist Church, even though she tries to escape the blue-haired, elderly ladies who lovingly pinch her cheek. From the balcony she admires the ladies' hats, and remembers what her mom told her: "We should dress up for the Lord." LaTasha notices everything — the usher's dazzling white gloves on Communion Sunday, the drum and tambourine keeping the beat to the walking-in music, and the other members' eyes on her as she puts her money in the collection plate. But for LaTasha the Sunday celebration is more than just the worship service. It's also the delicious supper that follows afterward.



Grimes' poetry gives readers a child's honest, humorous, and thought-provoking perspective on one church's experience of Sunday worship. Bryant's energetic illustrations capture the vibrant atmosphere of a church alive with Christ's love.

Reviews/Reflections

The Great Stone Face
A tale by Nathaniel Hawthorne
Retold by Gary D. Schmidt
Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2002.
Ages 6 and up



Nathaniel Hawthorne's tale, retold by Schmidt, introduces children to Ethan, a New Hampshire boy who daily looks up at the Great Stone Face carved into the mountain above his village. Ethan is aware of the prophecy Pastor Hooper speaks of: "Someone will be born hereabouts who will look just like the Great Stone Face, and he will be the noblest person of his time."

Over a period of time men come to the village — prosperous Augustus McBride, the great general Old Blood and Thunder, and the famous orator Trumbell Bounderby — and each time the villagers believe the prophecy has been fulfilled. But eventually they discard their conviction when the men's lives fail to reflect the Great Stone Face's gentle wisdom.

During these years, Ethan grows up to become a farmer, respected citizen, husband, and father; "his life was a stream that watered wide green banks all along its course, and every soul in the town who saw him smiled." Though the villagers don't think the prophecy has been fulfilled, Ethan's granddaughter, tracing her grandfather's features with her fingers, points out that "the prophecy came true long ago." The villagers finally realize that Ethan — gentle, wise, generous, and loving — is the prophecy's fulfilment.

In this compelling, wise tale, children learn that things aren't always as they seem, and that a world obsessed with success doesn't usually celebrate the characteristics that Ethan evidenced.

Promises to the Dead
Written by Mary Downing Hahn
New York: Clarion Books, 2000.
Ages 12 and up

Twelve-year-old Jesse's life is turned upside down when he promises Lydia, a runaway slave, that he'll bring her son Perry to safety in Baltimore. Since he believes a promise to the dead is a sacred thing, Jesse faces many troubles to keep his word. Plagued by a notorious slave catcher, and caught between the Confederate and Yankee armies, Jesse returns Perry to his family in an unexpected way.

I highly recommend this fast-paced, gripping historical novel that deals with the harsh realities of slavery, the white man's sexual exploitation of black women, the courage of those who defied slavery, and one boy's struggle to come to terms with which side was right.

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Memories

Beating Mooresburg

Ron DeBoer

I sometimes long for the old days when summer meant sunburns and freckles, long bike rides on dusty roads to the Keady store where we swigged cream soda, and softball games with my brothers when the shadows reached across our yard in the late evening. Those were the days when we lay sweating in the old canvas tent in the front yard, playing crazy eights or plotting a green-apple-ambush of the Wilson brothers when they biked past our farm with their fishing poles. Days seemed like weeks. School seemed on another planet. We didn't have a worry in the world.

Summer 2003 started a few weeks go and the hot topics of conversation going into those glorious months of July and August were SARS, West Nile disease, smog alerts, E. coli contaminated lakes and skin cancer. Today, you're considered an idiot taking your life into your hands if you jump into murky waters without first checking for the eyes of viruses or bacteria lurking below the surface waiting to pull you under.

While I don't mind slathering on the sun screen, spraying on mosquito repellent or drinking bottled water, what I miss is outdoor swimming. I miss those summer afternoons when the mud oozed between your toes and you couldn't see your own shorts because of the chocolate colored water of whatever pond you happened to be swimming in. Nobody had to teach you to pinch your eyes shut or keep your mouth closed. You tugged on a pair of jean cutoffs, found an old pair of running shoes, and you did a cannon ball right on top of your buddy, Larry, who had emerged, but who still hadn't opened his eyes.

Today, of course, we have big fancy recreation complexes where the sounds bounce off the walls and life guards patrol the pools like prison guards. Once, when I hoisted the eight year-old onto my shoulders and fell backwards, some pimply-faced lad in a red tank top shook his finger at me. At the community swimming pools, everyone wears thong sandals and carries around fluffy terry cloth towels with Disney characters on them, and then gingerly steps down the "safety-first" steps of the chlorine-hopped swimming pools. The chlorine is so bad in our community pool my girls' white hair turns green a week into the summer. They look like Disney animated characters themselves by the end of July.

Happy days

When I was growing up, swimming was the activity around which most of our other activities orbited. After the last load of hay was blown into the barn, my mother packed a picnic lunch, my father pulled on his leather sandals, my brothers and I pulled our shorts over our swimming trunks and we all piled into the big green Buick. We didn't punch each other or stare out the window gloomily as we did on our way to church. We were each other's best friends for the afternoon, and we were headed to see our good, good friend: the beach in Port Elgin where the waves were eight feet high.

We'd arrive sometime around noon. My Dad would wind the Buick through pine trees until he found a good spot, and we'd unload the picnic stuff. My Dad, who didn't cook anything the other 364 days of the year, was suddenly in charge of the cooking. He'd unfold the legs of the little round barbecue, shake out some barbecue coals from a bag, squirt lighter fluid all over them, then throw a match on the whole business, which went up in a whoosh. When it settled down, he'd plop a half dozen loose homemade burgers onto the grill and the sweet smell of barbecue filled our nostrils. My mother would set the picnic table with paper plates and plastic utensils; she'd take the lids off of bowls of potato salad, corn on the cob and sliced watermelon. After my Dad delivered the burgers, there'd be those few savage moments when we slobbered the food down hungrily, watermelon juice trickling down our chins, butter and salt from the corn-on-the-cob slicking our cheeks. My brothers and I weren't much into manners.

Of course, we'd have to wait a few minutes to go swimming after we'd wolfed down our food because we didn't want to get cramps and drown. My father would take out the family devotional, and we tried our best to listen to Psalm 107 and ignore the kids screaming happily and throwing Frisbees to each other while falling over little waves curling toward the sandy shore. When the last "amen" came from the closing prayer, we sprinted out of the pine trees to the beach, stripping our clothes off as we ran, and kept right on running, leaping over the white crested waves until the water got deeper and we collapsed into the warm Lake Huron waters. We laughed for no other reason than we were *at the beach*, throwing ourselves crazily backwards into the waves, wrestling each other onto the sand bars, scooping handfuls of sand and shoving it down each other's trunks. After a while my father would wade into the water — his body fish-belly white, save for his deep brown arms and neck. Farmer's tan. My brothers and I, of course, sprinted toward him in his moment of vulnerability, but before we could enjoy the satisfaction of splashing him, he'd dive into a wave.

After a while, of course, we'd emerge from the waters of Lake Huron. We'd sit on the sandy shoreline with a towel wrapped around our shoulders, shivering, our hair slicked down. My mother would open a bag of chips and we'd bury our wet hands into the bag so that the chips became soggy; the sun would dry our tanned bodies and then we'd sprint into the waves and start the whole business all over again. And so it went until we headed home sometime in the late afternoon to milk the cows.

Wonder years

My own near-coming-of-age occurred at a swimming hole a few county roads from our farm. Mooresburg is this little speck on the map off of Highway 6 in the back roads of Grey County, but it will forever be the place where I failed to prove myself a man. A gravel road led into Mooresburg, crossed over a stone bridge, and before you could reach down to pop in a Nazareth eight-track tape, you were on the other side of Mooresburg.

That stone bridge became the bane of my existence and the dragon from which I spent an entire summer fleeing.

The river running through Mooresburg had no business having that title.It was more like a creek and save for the little area where the locals came to wash the grain dust off their bodies, its grassy banks met each other as the river meandered into the woods and disappeared. But someone had dug out part of the river bed under the bridge, and had built a diving board mounted on a block of cement close to the bridge, an old gray plank of wood with a little rug nailed to the end to prevent splinters. The river bed itself was covered in smooth Davy and Goliath stones – they'd didn't hurt at all – but in the dug out area under the bridge, larger rocks jutted out of the banks. You had to be careful to jump in the right place – we called it the *sweet spot* of Mooresburg. There were boys' and girls' changing rooms, too; you had to walk down a thin mud path between long lush grass to get to the little plywood hut. The boys changing room was separated from the girls changing room by a plywood wall with several holes drilled into it, but that's a whole other story!

When you emerged from the changing room, you waded into the rust-colored creek water and immediately felt its healing powers. Mooresburg was a little oasis in the world of dusty farm roads, blistering days in the sun haying, and sweltering barns.

After diving for interesting rocks and jumping off the grassy banks into the Mooresburg creek, my brothers would venture to the diving board. It had some good spring to it, that's for sure. My older brothers bounced off the end and catapulted themselves into the air confidently, hitting the sweet spot where the river bed had been dug out. I tip-toed to the end of the diving board, plugged my nose and jumped in, too. My younger brother, Doug, stood shivering on the diving board next. Surely he'd be too scared to do what I'd dare to do. But, no, he ran off the end of the board with sheer joy on his face and hit the water so hard he splashed the underside of the bridge – an accomplishment worthy of whoops of awe from the older brothers.

Eventually, the older brothers climbed the embankment to the gravel road, walked gingerly across the sharp stones and stepped over the stone fence of the bridge. They hit the sweet spot beautifully. I shuffled to the top of the bridge, too, climbed over the stone posts, too, looked down at the water, too.

Frozen in July

Then I froze. There's no way I'd survive a fall that high. My brothers, meanwhile, had hoisted themselves out of the water and had climbed onto the bridge again.

Christian Living

Only this time they scrambled onto the post of the bridge — their toes curled over the stone edge – before leaping off and hitting the sweet spot. Over and over again, my brothers climbed the bridge post, jumped off and splashed the underside of the bridge gloriously.

If only I could splash the underside of the bridge.

Instead, I stood shivering, gathering up all my courage to jump, only to feel the air leave my body at the critical moment when I was supposed to allow gravity to do its thing.

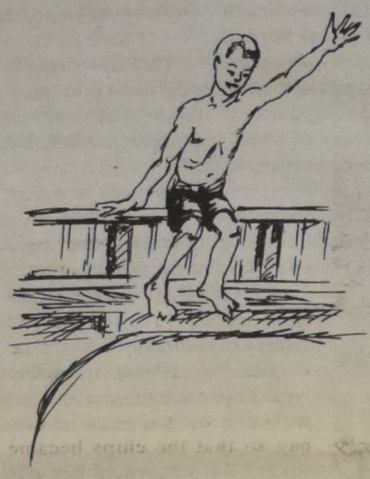
The sun was fast setting –physically behind the bush – and metaphorically on my chance to prove I was a man. My brothers were toweling themselves off now; my parents were calling us to the car to go home. Because of them I wasn't going to be able to jump!

Then I saw my little brother ambling his way up the embankment to the bridge. I stared at him in horror. That little bugger was going to jump off the bridge! Wasn't that against the rules of brothers? He was a year younger than me, for Pete's sake. He was supposed to wait until next year. But his wet little tanned body came tip-toeing over the sharp gravel of the road. His hands were jammed into his arm pits. You could see the goose bumps all over his skin. Ha! He was scared. That would teach him for scaling these heights at his age.

By now my hair was dry – I'd been standing on the bridge so long. Doug's was plastered to his forehead from his last jackknife off the diving board. He didn't even look at me. He climbed up the bridge post and stood standing with *his* toes curled over the edge. That little bugger was going to skip the bridge stage and go straight to the post! My parents and brothers stopped in mid-toweling to watch. It was as if the whole world had stopped and turned to see Doug standing on the post and me his *older* brother standing on the mere bridge beneath him. Their eyes had that awestruck is-he-*really*-going-to-do-it? look in them. You could tell they were planning to make a trophy for him or something.

Then he jumped, his body flying past me, the water parting as he hit the sweet spot. His splash was so impressive water rose toward me and landed on the road. Everyone cheered wildly.

Then they looked at me shivering on the bridge. "You gonna jump or what?" one of the older brothers said with a tone of voice that sounded something like *that'll be the day.* Doug was looking up at me from the water beneath me. I should've jumped straight on his face right then, but I looked back at my brothers who had now turned toward the car. I stood



standing a few minutes longer as Doug got out, toweled off and climbed into the car, too.

Dad started the car. I bent my knees, felt the coarse stone of the bridge under my finger nails behind me. I rocked forward on my toes.

I straightened up again. That was it. My Dad rolled down the window and gave me that no-nonsense-anymore-stern-look. I climbed back over the stone fence of the bridge and tip-toed to the car, deflated. I sat slumped against the car door for the whole trip back home.

For the rest of the summer, I thought about how I was going to slay that dragon called Mooresburg. I day-dreamed of balancing on the post, turning around so that my back faced the water, and doing a summersault straight into the sweet spot. But then we'd arrive at Mooresburg, my brothers would run straight to the bridge, turn around on the post and do a backward summersault into the sweet spot. The best I could muster was a cannon ball off the diving board with one hand pinching my nostrils shut.

A second chance

That was the summer I was 13. The following year we moved far away. I never came-of-age at Mooresburg. In fact, I had never been back to Mooresburg. Mooresburg will forever be a word equated with failure for me.

Until this morning.

It's 25 years later — July 2003. Last night I asked the twelve year-old if she wanted to go on a road trip to my boyhood. She rolled her eyes, asked impatiently for clarification, then agreed, as long as I bought her an egg McMuffin on the way out of town. So at 6:00 this morning, the two of us hopped in the van, did McDonald's drive thru, and hit the highway to the back roads of Grey County, some 100 km north. I knew it was going to be a special day when we turned out of our driveway and saw two deer grazing on a neighbor's front yard; they looked up at us then continued their grazing. The twelve year-old and I saw them at the same time and no words needed to be spoken. We just smiled at one another.

We traveled down Highway Six, turned off at Dornoch then made a right a couple of clicks later in search of my dragon. Then I saw it. The blue roadside sign said *Mooresburg,* and as the road curved slightly to the left, the stone bridge came into view, bathed in brilliant early morning sunlight, as if descending on a shaft of light from heaven....

"That's it?" sniffed the twelve year-old.

"That is *it*," I smiled. We parked, stretched, and I inhaled the early morning country smells of my boyhood. It hadn't changed a bit. Same stone bridge, same diving board, same ripple of water over the stones where the river meandered into the woods. The only new information I learned was that the river was called *Styx River*, which is, in Greek mythology, the river of hell. At any moment that skeleton in the cloak would come paddling his longboat toward me and say, "Ahhhh, DeBoer, you've returned. Climb aboard...."

The twelve year-old's voice cut into my thoughts. "Daaad, there's fish in there." She was shivering and staring down into the water. "You swam in there? You could get E. coli."

"That was back in the days before bacteria," I said.

I leaned over and touched the water with my finger tips then looked up at the bridge. "I've got to jump off that bridge," I murmured.

"Are you nuts?" said the twelve year-old.

"I can't leave without jumping off that bridge."

"Then you're going to die a lonely old man," said the twelve year-old.

I returned to the van, rummaged around and brought out my camera, handing it to her.

"You are going to shoot a dragon today," I announced.

The twelve year-old's right eye brow crawled up her forehead. "Huh?"

"You are going to take the picture of me jumping off the bridge."

"Whatever."

I climbed up the embankment, walked gingerly across the little stones on the gravel road then swung my one leg then the other over the side of the stone bridge. I looked down at the water then over to the grassy banks. They were all standing there—my parents beside the big '73 Buick, my brothers toweling off their shoulder length hair, all of Mooresburg in tableau—watching to see if I would do it, if I'd mustered any new courage in the last 25 years. I looked down at the water again then looked at my daughter.

"Ready?" I called out to her.

She raised a thumb then brought the camera to her eye. I bent my knees to jump, felt the coarse stone bridge under my finger nails then felt the whoosh of

air tickle my body momentarily before knifing into the sweet spot, the waters of the Styx River washing icily over me. I touched the river bed, and I felt the little pebbles on the bottoms of my feet as I pushed off and resurfaced with a gasp. The whole thing seemed in slow motion, and when the film of the river water cleared from my eyes, my parents were gone, the Buick was gone, my brothers were gone. Only the twelve year-old, jumping up and down, clapping happily.

I climbed out of the water and shook myself off. "I didn't bring a towel," I said.

"I know," said the twelve year-old. She disappeared behind the van then came back out with the gray blanket we keep in the back for emergencies. She unfolded it and put it around my shoulders.

We climbed back into the van and headed down the gravel road toward home. We have air-conditioning, but I thought it appropriate to open the window, lean my elbow out and feel the wind in our hair as we sped down Highway Six. After a while, I asked the twelve year-old to show me the pictures she'd taken. We have one of those digital cameras where you can view the picture on the little screen at the back. She clicked a couple of times then said, "Oh-oh."

A modern movie ending

"What?" I grabbed the camera from her and held it on top of the steering wheel.

Cue the long shot from the clouds as our van meanders down Highway Six and listen to my desperate distant scream, "Noooooo."

The twelve year-old had taken two pictures: one of me standing on the bridge looking down into the water at precisely the second *before* jumping; the other of the cool surface of the water, taken at precisely the time I entered the water but had yet to emerge. In other words, there was no proof I had jumped off of the bridge of Mooresburg. In yet other words, there was no way I was going to email the pictures to my brothers now because they'd never believe I did it and I would be the laughingstock — again — for the next 25 years.

I pulled off to the side of the road and pondered whether or not to do a one-eighty and head back to Mooresburg.

"Dad," said the twelve year-old suddenly. I lifted my forehead off the steering wheel. "*I* saw you do it."

I looked at her for a few seconds then smiled. I put the van into gear and pulled back onto Highway Six.

I doubt I'll ever stand on the bridge of Mooresburg again.

Health

Health care teams: an overview

Lisa M. Petsche

Older adults admitted to hospitals or long-term care facilities often have complicated health conditions necessitating the intervention of professionals from a variety of disciplines. Service delivery by health care teams ensures a coordinated, holistic approach to assessment and treatment. Members consult and collaborate on an ongoing basis in order to determine needs, develop care plans and assist patients in achieving identified goals.

Team membership typically consists of the following health care professionals: physician, nurses, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, dietician, speech-language pathologist, social worker, recreation therapist and chaplain.

Depending on the setting, some may be considered core team members while others are consulted on an as-needed basis.

Following is an overview of each member's role.

• Case Manager

As team leader, the case manager (sometimes known by other titles such as primary care coordinator) is responsible for overall planning, coordinating care and evaluating outcomes. Inpatient case managers are usually registered nurses.

They report to a program director or health-care administrator who oversees day-to-day program operation, including quality control, efficiency, staffing and budget issues.

• Physician

Physicians diagnose and treat medical problems in consultation with the team, ordering investigations and treatments as needed. They make referrals to specialists — for example, geriatrician, psychiatrist, urologist, orthopaedic surgeon — as needed.

• Nursing Staff

Depending on their level of training, nursing staff develop and monitor a plan of nursing care, help assess patients' health status, administer medication and other physician-ordered treatments and assist with personal care.

Registered nurses (RNs) have the most education, and therefore the broadest range of skills and widest scope of responsibility. They're assisted by registered practical nurses (RPNs), health care aides (HCAs) or personal support workers (PSWs), who provide most bedside care.

• Physiotherapist (PT)

Physiotherapists are exercise specialists who evaluate patients' functional ability and work with them to improve or maintain walking, balance, endurance, strength and flexibility. They recommend mobility aids such as canes and walkers and train patients in their proper use.

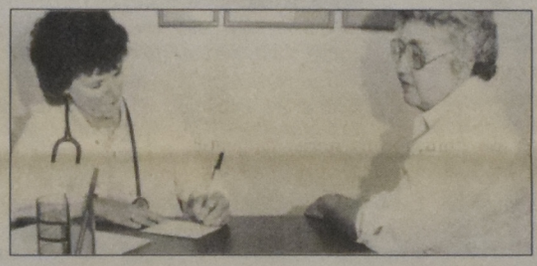
PTs also develop customized exercise programs for patients to follow after active therapy is completed, in order to continue the benefits gained. In long-term care settings, they or assistants (PTAs) under their supervision may assist non-ambulatory residents with gentle bed exercises to keep joints flexible, decrease pain and help with circulation.

• Occupational Therapist (OT)

Occupational therapists teach people with disabilities alternative ways of carrying out daily activities and recommend adaptive equipment where appropriate. Basic activities of daily living (ADLs) include feeding, toileting, washing, dressing and grooming.

Higher level skills, known as instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), include getting to places beyond walking distance, using the telephone, grocery shopping, preparing meals, doing housework, managing money, problem-solving in emergency situations and accessing the community. For those unable to walk, OTs recommend wheelchair seating that meets their particular needs in terms of independence, safety and comfort.

OT assistants (OTAs) may provide ADL retraining, power wheelchair training and other services under an OT's supervision.



OTs also have expertise in bed positioning techniques that minimize skin breakdown and other problems. For patients planning to return home, OTs may perform a home assessment to identify environmental obstacles and hazards and make recommendations — home adaptations or purchase of medical equipment — to address them.

• Dietician

A specialist in nutrition, the dietician evaluates the patient's nutritional status and recommends necessary dietary changes as a way of helping to treat various diet-related health problems, such as diabetes, high cholesterol, constipation, obesity and excessive weight loss.

• Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)

The speech-language pathologist assesses and treats difficulties related to hearing, speech, language (both expression and understanding) and swallowing.

She provides speech therapy, gives training (to the patient, family and staff) in alternative methods of communication where necessary and performs hearing screenings. Where problems exist with swallowing, she may recommend modified food textures or specific feeding techniques to minimize the risk of food ending up in the lungs, which can lead to pneumonia.

• Social Worker

The social worker assesses the social, emotional and personal implications of health changes and institutionalization for patients and their families, and helps them learn how to cope more effectively with losses, emotional issues, family problems, financial concerns, depression and behavioral changes.

He or she also serves as a patient advocate, and links patients and their families with community resources, including when discharge is required.

• Recreation Therapist

In long-term care facilities, recreation therapists coordinate activities that are enjoyable, therapeutic and educational — from bingo and pet visiting to birthday parties and pub nights to horticulture and news groups. They attempt to match new residents to facility programs based on their previous hobbies, interests and cultural practices. (On dementia care units, however, much of their work involves one-to-one programming, since group activities are often not appropriate.)

They also organize community outings such as shopping excursions and trips to cultural events. Their work fosters quality of life by providing opportunities for fun, creativity, socialization and learning.

• Chaplain

The chaplain provides spiritual guidance and support to patients and families, addressing issues around faith, meaning and purpose. Chaplains also facilitate contact with religious leaders in the community.

• Other

In order to meet every possible need, other disciplines in consulting roles may be called upon from time to time, such as a clinical nurse specialist, podiatrist or specialized types of physicians.

Together, the various disciplines work with a patient — and often also his or her family — to help achieve the highest possible level of health, independence and quality of life.

Lisa M. Petsche is a freelance writer and medical social worker specializing in geriatrics.

Muslim scholars debate

...continued from page 6

It was that recognition that enabled several generations of Muslim scholars to dig into the Greek, Persian, and Indian philosophical and cultural heritage in order to enrich Islamic thought.

The theopolitical discourse that is designed to limit freedom of thought and expression in the Muslim world is a new phenomenon developed by a small number of militant thinkers influenced by Western totalitarian ideologies, especially Communism and Fascism.

In that sense, the challenge that most Muslim peoples face today is a political, rather than religious, one. It is perfectly possible for Muslims to develop a modern and democratic society in the era of globalization. But to do that they have to understand that religion is part of life, not the other way around as the theopolitical discourse suggests.

The conferenciers of Kuala Lumpur, probably afraid of incurring the wrath of demagogues, missed an opportunity to lead the debate in that direction.

Amir Taheri is an Iranian journalist and author of ten books on the Middle East and Islam. The article is reprinted here courtesy of www.benadorassociates.com. It shows an Islamic thinker touching on the principle that we call sphere sovereignty and Catholic thinkers call subsidiarity.

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WE STAND BENEATH OUR ROOFS

Prayer amid anguish: meditation on Psalm 143

By Pope John Paul II

VATICAN CITY (Zenit.org) – Psalm 143 is the last of the so-called Penitential Psalms which make up seven supplications spread throughout the Psalter (Psalm 6; 31; 37; 50; 101; 129; 142). Christian tradition has used them to invoke forgiveness of sins from the Lord. The text which we reflect on was especially dear to St. Paul, who deduced from it the radical sinfulness of every human creature: "Before you no living being can be just" (v. 2). This phrase is used by him as the basis of his teaching on sin and grace (see Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:20).

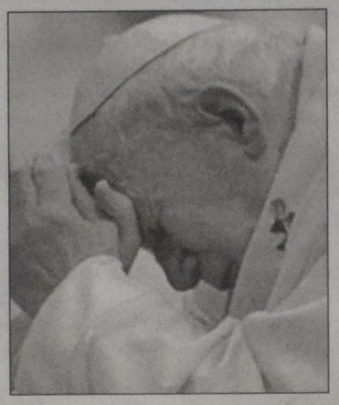
The Liturgy of Lauds puts this supplication in our mouths as a resolution of our faithfulness and to implore divine help at the beginning of the day. The Psalm makes us say to God: "At dawn let me hear of your kindness, for in you I trust" (vs.8).

Among the dead

The Psalm begins with an intense and insistent invocation addressed to God, faithful to the promises of salvation offered to the people (vs.1). The man of prayer acknowledges that he has no merits to make him worthy and, therefore, humbly asks God not to assume the attitude of a judge (vs.2).

Then he portrays the dramatic situation, similar to a terrifying nightmare in which he is struggling against death: the enemy, which is the representation of evil in history and in the world, has lead him to the threshold of death. There he is, in fact, prostrate in the dust of the earth, which is an image of the sepulcher. He presents the darkness, which is the negation of light, divine sign of life; and mentions, finally, "those long dead," that is, the deceased (vs.3), among whom he seems already to be relegated.

The Psalmist is devastated to the very core of his existence: at this point he has no breath, his heart seems like a piece of ice, unable to continue beating (vs.4). Only his hands remain free, raised to heaven in a gesture that is at the same time an imploration of help and a seeking of support (vs.6). His thoughts revert to the past in which God worked wonders (vs.5).



This spark of hope melts the ice of suffering and trial in which the man of prayer feels himself immersed and about to be swept away (vs.7). The tension, however, remains strong; but a ray of light seems to appear on the horizon.

Thus we pass to the second part of the Psalm (vss.7-11).

God's hidden countenance

It begins with a new and urgent invocation. The faithful psalmist, feeling that life is escaping from him, cries out to God: "Hasten to answer me, Lord; for my spirit fails me" (vs.7). What is more, he fears that God has hidden his countenance and has distanced himself, abandoning him and leaving his creature alone.

The concealment of the divine countenance makes man fall into desolation, in fact, into death itself, for the Lord is the source of life. However, it is precisely in this sort of extreme situation that trust in God flowers: he does not abandon us. The man of prayer multiplies his invocations and supports them with declarations of trust in the Lord. "For in you I trust ... for to you I lift up my soul ... I have fled to you for refuge ... for you are my God." He asks that he be delivered from his enemies (vss.8-12) and freed from anguish (vs.11) but he also makes a repeated request, which manifests a profound spiritual aspiration: "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God" (vss.10; 8b).

We must make this admirable request our own. We must understand that our greatest good is the union of our will with the will of the heavenly Father, because only in this way can we receive all his love, which brings salvation and the fullness of life. If it is not accompanied by a strong desire of submission to God, our trust in him is not authentic.

The psalmist is aware of this and therefore expresses this desire. He raises a true and proper profession of faith in God the Savior, who breaks the anguish and restores the taste of life, in the name of his "justice," in other words of his loving and saving faithfulness (vs.11). Arising from a particularly anguishing situation, prayer leads to hope, to joy and to light, thanks to a sincere adherence to God and to his will, which is a will of love. This is the power of prayer, generator of life and salvation.

The dawn of hope

Fixing his gaze on the morning light of grace (vs.8), St. Gregory the Great, in his commentary on the seven Penitential Psalms, describes the dawn of hope and joy in this way: "It is the day illuminated by that true sun that knows no setting, which the clouds do not obscure and the fog cannot darken.... When Christ, our life, appears and we begin to see God with an uncovered face, every shade of darkness will disappear, the smoke of ignorance will vanish, the mist of temptation will dissipate.... It will be the most luminous and splendid day, prepared for all the elect by him who has snatched us from the power of darkness and has transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

"The morning of that day is the future resurrection.... In that morning the happiness of the righteous will shine, glory will appear, exultation will be seen, when God will wipe away every tear from the eyes of the saints, when death, at last, will be destroyed, when the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

"That morning, the Lord will make his mercy felt, saying: 'Come blessed of my Father' (Matthew 25:34). Then the mercy of God will be manifested which, in the present life, the human mind cannot conceive. In fact, the Lord has prepared for those who love him that which no eye has seen and no ear has heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man" (LF 79, coll. 649-650).

Ugandans suffering is outrageous, but what can we do?

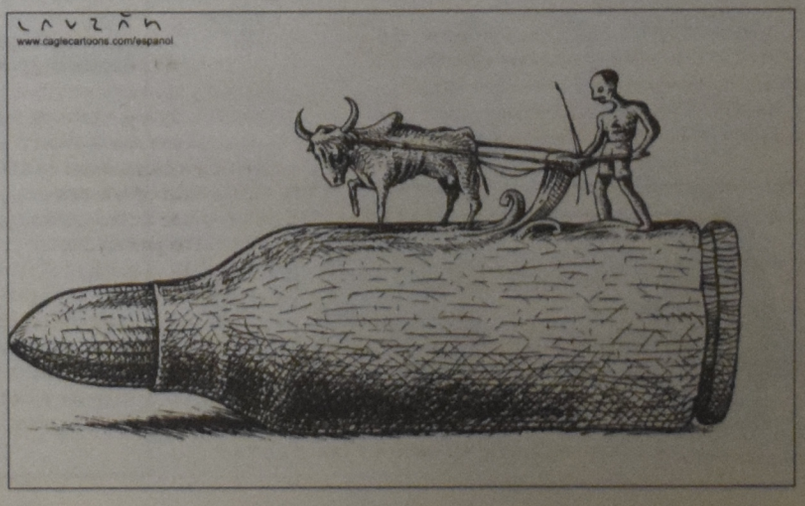
Elly Klumperhouwer

Imagine for a moment that you live in a rural area with your family. But you can't sleep in your own home. Every night you take you spouse and children into the city to take refuge among the thousands of others who gather on the grounds of hospitals or elsewhere for safety. Your country is at war, the government is on one side and a group claiming to fight for God – the Lord's Resistance Army (IRA) – on the other. Staying home with your children would make them an easy prey. The LRA will abduct them, use them as sex slaves and infect them with AIDS and HIV. Your own children would become victims of the brutality of rebels. Many of these rebels themselves were abducted as children, forced to bear arms and brutalize other children. And the government which is supposed to protect your family is no better than the enemy.

I was in Uganda this past April. I visited St. Mary's Lacor Hospital near Gulu where large crowds of families gather at night for safety. I also visited Stella Matutina Girls' Secondary School, another location where people gather. Two young women there told me their stories. One of them had lived with rebels for two years and had a child. The other woman managed to escape after 10 years of captivity. She had two children, one of whom died. The first woman told me her story in a very passionate way. The second woman talked in a lifeless monotone tone. Both of them appeared traumatized for life by their experiences. The sisters who managed the school were able to offer these women love, education and freedom. However, they had few resources to assist them with the psychological impact of the experiences and the healing process.

I also traveled to a displaced persons camp that holds about 10,000 people. All together there are 800,000 people in such camps. The people live in these camps because their villages and homes are frequently raided by the LRA. Even if they wanted to return home the military would prevent them. This makes them virtual prisoners in these camps. I saw many undernourished children and watched mothers trying to cook food for their families with very few resources and in dismal conditions.

I visited a clinic where a large number of HIV positive people had come for treatment. I met with an AIDS education group for young people in the Kamuli District. They were very concerned about the high rate of pregnancies in secondary schools and the resulting drop out rates for girls. I visited



villages where AIDS is common place and met a woman who was dying of AIDS. She was lying outside on a mattress under a shelter, visibly ill and very uncomfortable, and having difficulty sitting up.

Life expectancy is low and medical care is hard to get, especially in the rural areas. I did not see many people my age (72) while I was there. However there are many primary schools and lots of children everywhere. The children were well behaved and helpful. They have no fancy toys and entertain themselves with rocks and sticks! Once, when I struggled to get out of the car, two little guys reached out and grabbed my hand to pull me out. I wondered if Ugandans respect seniors simply because there are so few of seniors around.

I toured a prison where men lived in absolute squalor. The women's prison was not much better. Fifteen women were under death sentence and several women had children living with them.

The people I met were grateful for what the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC), and other faith based agencies are doing to help them. I was overwhelmed by their warmth, hospitality and genuine gratitude just for my being there and taking an interest in them.

Going to Uganda was a real eye opener for me. I have spent the last 14 years working for justice with prisoners in the Canadian prison system. I saw no justice in Uganda. Having seen so many people traumatized by war, disease and poverty, I cannot stop thinking about them. I felt guilty when I first got home just going into a store or looking at my own home and the luxury we live in. Uganda is always on my mind.

Every day I wonder why we have so much and the people in Uganda have so little. Could the reason be racial? There is a huge gap between the rich and the poor in Uganda. Is there a connection between their poverty and our wealth, and between their radical insecurity and the security we take for granted here in Canada? Why are the living conditions in Uganda so horrible as compared to ours? I have lots of questions and not many answers.

My trip to Uganda has profoundly changed my life. Only the Lord knows where I should go from here. One thing I do know. I am outraged that people have to live, suffer, struggle and die in the condition that I witnessed. These conditions cannot improve until we in the wealthy and safe part of the world open our eyes and see what is happening in Uganda and other places like it. The outrageous evil that is being committed in Uganda cries out for justice. But are we willing to listen? What can we do?

Prayer is a powerful tool. But I think that besides praying for the people of Uganda we should also pray for ourselves, the wealthy people of North America. We should pray that are eyes may be opened to the injustices elsewhere in the world. Our blindness is permitting the atrocities to continue.

I am sharing my experiences in Uganda so that we together, under God's direction, can find out how to do make things right.

Elly Klumperhouwer is the program coordinator for the Mentoring Group in the Edmonton Institution for Women. She also works with the Mennonite Central Committee. Elly is a member of the Inglewood Christian Reformed Church.

Reading obituaries

When I read *The Grand Rapids Press* I always check out the obituaries, curious to find out whether someone I know has died. That may mean a trip to the funeral home to visit the bereaved, and possibly to attend the funeral. In the process I will peruse the various announcements to check the church membership of those departed and the ministers conducting the services, etc. Lately I've also been taking note of the way in which those obituaries are announcing the simple fact of a person's death. Very rarely does an announcement just say, flat out, "John Smith died yesterday at the age of 91 years." It seems as though the persons responsible for these announcements believe they must find some special way of revealing what is quite obvious by virtue of it being in the obituary section.

Just what does it mean?

Many announcements say that mother (or dad) passed away," which is, I suppose, a softer way of saying that she died. When you really press the import of passing away it becomes clear that it is open to some vagueness. Just what does it mean? The end of any existence? Black believers often say that someone has "passed," with the import of passing from this life to the next. That makes good sense. But passing away is something much less meaningful. It likely fits the agnostic or atheist mind on such an occasion.

Now I know it is not so easy to write an obituary, which I discovered when I had the responsibility of writing it for my mother. For it is not just the announcement of a death but that of a Christian believer. I found that one is tempted at that point to make the great assumption, likely valid but not necessarily so, that one's loved one has "gone to be with Jesus." I believed this, but to state it as a fact is possibly not our's to do. I settled for: "She died in the faith." along with details of her membership in the church. (As an aside I should say that all my careful thought went to naught because a secretary judged that it didn't make sense and changed it to "She died in faith.")

Assumptions and embellishments

But the obituaries of most believers are not so subtly put together. Many just state categorically that their loved one went to be with Jesus. That becomes a statement of faith on the part of the family as well as of the departed one. And it is amazing the percentage of the announcements in the Press which make this confession. That tells us that this is a very believing community. Even discounting it a bit because of the fact that everybody wants to go to heaven, and when death comes people can't bear to think otherwise of their dear one, this is a mark of faith in the eternal salvation the Lord has provided us. One said it very pointedly "Anne ... joined the Church Triumphant...." Such confessions stand in sharp contrast to information given by non-Christians and those who receive the last rights of the Masons or the Order of the Eastern Star.

But then the assumptions and embellishments enter the picture. I'll give you some actual quotes of statements I found, most of them of people with CRC church connections, with names changed of course.

"Vicki ... was promoted to Heaven on Sunday, ..." (She was a Baptist.)

"Sally ... went to join her Mother, Esther, whom she never knew and her dear brothers and sister with the Lord." This likely involves a lot of wishful thinking – that even before the resurrection we are in fellowship with all the saints in glory. It is surely a comforting thought but who would dare to claim it at this stage of the Lord's restoration of his creation and his creatures?

Theologically correct obituaries?

But then take note of the assumptions of some others. "... with the wind beneath her wings, the Lord took Mary home to be with her mother Flossy and brother." Does this have something to do with becoming angelic? And what about: "Susan leaped into the arms of Jesus"? Or "Thelma joined the heavenly chorus where her rich alto voice joined those of the angels in praising her God."? Isn't there an intermediate state between death and the glory of the new heaven and earth?

And some visions reach well into the very Judgment Day itself: "Thomas ... went to live with God forever ... We know he heard the welcome, 'Well done good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of the Lord'." You'd think Reformed people would put a bit more of their theology into their obituaries.

There are also obituaries that cover a great deal of pain without an explanation. When we read that someone "passed away suddenly," it could mean a stroke or heart attack, but It could also mean having become the victim of homicide or death by one's own hand. It is not often that a family will publicly acknowledge a suicide. I do recall a recent exception in which we were told that "Bill died suddenly, after a losing battle with depression." It was an honest and courageous announcement in which the family revealed its special sorrow and received a heartfelt, sympathetic response.

One other item marks the obituaries of so many people – they have died of cancer. And almost always the announcement is along this line: "John passed away, after a courageous battle with cancer." It is always a courageous battle. One wonders whether there was ever someone who lacked courage facing that dread disease? Could it be that much of this is simply paying an expected public tribute to one who was victimized by what is an all too common enemy?

And then I read that "Alicia Mae, aged 2 1/2 weeks, ... went to be with Jesus after a courageous fight with a congenital heart defect.... She will also be sadly missed by her twin sister,..." That leads me to believe that we should likely take those courageous struggles with just a tiny grain of salt.

Ty Hofman is a Yankee-Canuck and retired miniser of the Christian Reformed Church, living in Grand Rapids, Mich.

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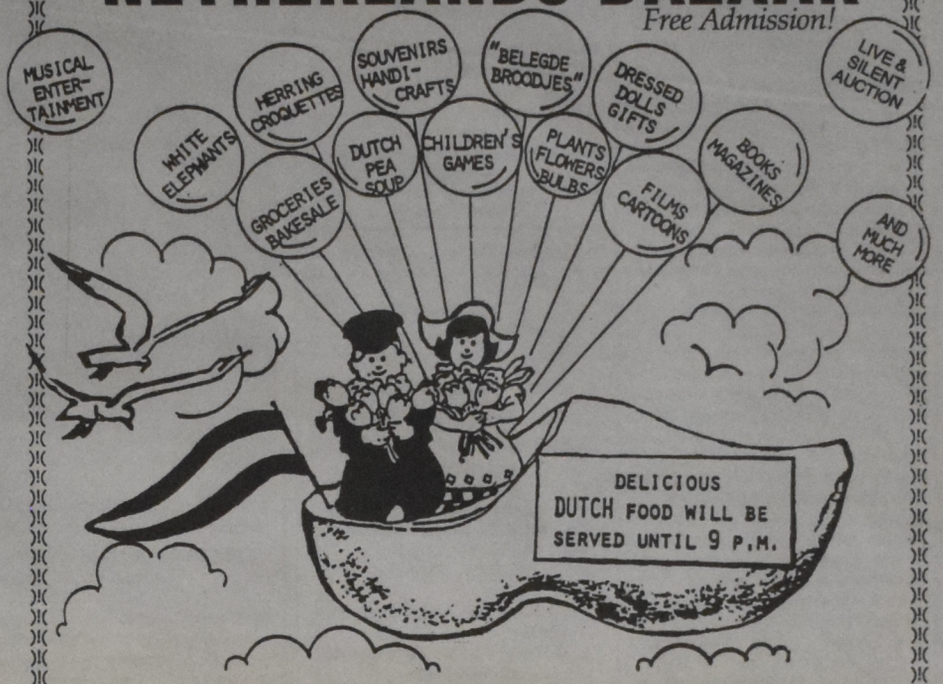

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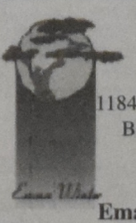

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RATES: (GST added)
All personal and family announcements: $16.00 per column inch (P.I.) (2" wide); **rose@christiancourier.ca**
Display re. businesses & organizations: $18.20 P.I.; **ads@christiancourier.ca**
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Family Celebrations

Ed & Tilda Bosman gladly announce the **engagement** of their daughter

Arlene Joyce Bosman
and
David Josias Rooseboom
on July 18, 2003.
We give them our love and support as they prepare for marriage.

We also rejoice at the **birth** of our second grandchild

Josiah Phabian Paul
born June 18, 2003
to **Julianne & Devon Paul** and Semyra.
We thank God, the giver of life, and pray for His blessing on this family.

Birth Announcement

With thanksgiving to our Lord
Mike & Tracy De Weerd
(nee Scholten)
joyfully announce the arrival of

Ryan Jack De Weerd
born on July 19, 2003
in Palmerston, Ont., weighing 8 lb. 4 oz.
He is a little brother for Kaitlyn & Cody.
Another grandchild for Jack & Theresa Scholten and John & Mary De Weerd.
Another great-grandchild for Alice Van Gyssel, Henry & Lammie Rumph and Karen Scholten and a great-great-grandchild for Lutina Rumph.
Home address:
RR1 Alma ON N0B 1A0

Birthday

Roden, The Netherlands - Grimsby, Ontario
1923 August 15 2003

Dorothy Boonstra
80th Birthday

We thank and praise God
for His love and faithfulness in the life
of our Mother, Grandmother, and
Great-Grandmother as we celebrate
her 80th Birthday.
Home address: 275 Main St E #101
Grimsby ON L3M 5N8

Anniversaries

New Westminster BC Edmonton AB
August 24, 1963 August 24, 2003

On August 16, 2003
our family hopes to celebrate the
40th Wedding Anniversary of

HENK AND VICKY VAN ANDEL

Psalm 100:5
We are grateful for God's unfailing love and faithfulness.
Ken & Joyce Van Andel, *Bolton,ON*
Kevin, Jeffrey, Stephanie, Melissa
Eric & Natalie Van Andel, *Woodstock,ON*
Stephen, Heather, David
Harmen Van Andel, *Edmonton,AB*
Alex
David & Nicole Van Andel, *Surrey,BC*
Devon, Ryan
Julie & Daniel Friesen, *Edmonton,AB*
Jordan, Brandon, Nathan
Home address: 13607 – 109 Avenue
Edmonton AB T5M 2G8
henkva@telus.net

1963 August 10 2003

With joy and thankfulness to the Lord,
we hope to celebrate
with our parents and grandparents

BINNE AND NELLIE KLOOSTERMAN
(nee Wierdsma)
the occasion of their **40th Wedding Anniversary** on August 10th D.V.

"The Lord is my Shepherd,
I shall not be in want." Psalm 23:1

We pray the Lord will continue to bless them in the years to come.
Their loving children:
Arlene & Dick Wolters, *Belleville*
Yvonne Kloosterman, *Peterborough*
Evelyn Jansen, *Bowmanville*
Howard & Christine Kloosterman, *Baltimore*
6 granddaughters & 2 grandsons

Home Address: RR6 1205 Bensfort Rd
Peterborough ON K9J 6X7

1963 August 14 2003

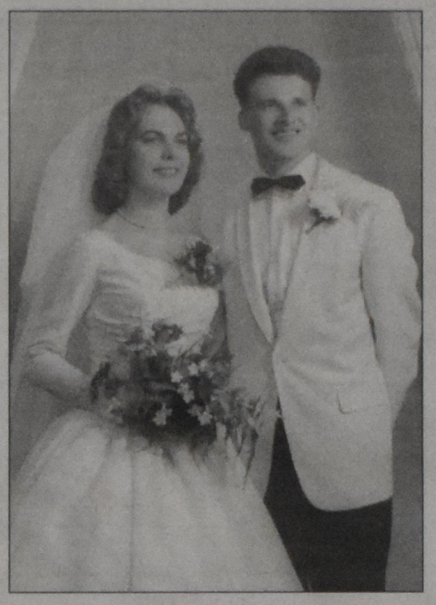
With joy and thanksgiving, we celebrate
the **40th Wedding Anniversary**
of our parents and parents-in-law

HENK AND LIZ NIENHUIS (nee Lof)

Congratulations Mom and Dad,
Opa and Oma! May God continue to
bless your lives together.
With love:
Peggy & Kevin Smit, *Kirkland, WA*
Elizabeth, Joshua, Kyle
Wilma & Ken Rauwerda, *Nanaimo,BC*
Kenny, Nathan
Peter & Katie Nienhuis, *Victoria,BC*

Home Address: 489 Treanor Avenue
Victoria BC V9B 3H2
E-mail Address:hnienhuis@yahoo.com

Anniversaries



PETER AND JOANNE RAAKMAN (nee Kraay)
1963 August 17, St. Catharines 2003

With thanksgiving to God, we congratulate our parents & grandparents on their **40th Wedding Anniversary.**
We pray God's continued care over you for many more years.
With love from: Pete & Ingrid
Tim
Jim & Elaine - Kohen, Brennyn
Dave & Melanie - Brianna, Rachel
An **Open House** will be held Sat., Aug. 16, 2:30 - 5 p.m. at Bethany Community Church, 1388 Third St. (North of QEW), St. Catharines. *Best wishes only.*
Home Address:12 Gavin Dr., St. Catharines ON L2M 2X6

Holland Marsh, Ontario
1953 August 26 2003

"Rejoice in the Lord always; I will say it again! Rejoice."

With Praise and Thanksgiving to our Covenant God for His Faithfulness we hope to celebrate the
50th Wedding Anniversary of our Parents and Grandparents;

TAEKE AND AGNES VISSER (nee Visser)

We pray the Lord will continue to uphold and bless them in His tender love and care. Our congratulations and love;

Rita & Michael Van Hartingsveldt - Jordan, Elliott,*Jordan Station,ON*
Rick & Sheila Visser - Charlene, Shelly, *Holland Marsh,ON*
Brian & Theresa Visser - Bridget, *Holland Marsh,ON*
Cynthia & Bill Wolfert - Brandon, Jessica, Billy, *Bradford,ON*

Home Address: Edward Avenue RR 2, Newmarket ON L3Y 4V9

We look forward to celebrating the anniversary of our parents and grandparents

HENK AND WILLEMINA DE ZOETE (nee Schinkel)

married 55 years ago, on August 25, 1948, in Ijsselmuiden, The Netherlands. With thanks for God's faithfulness, we extend our love and best wishes!

Henk & Anna - Johan, Matthew, Annalise
Rick & Shirl - Charlene & Mike, Michael, Julia, Lisa
Gus
Roy & Evelyn - Jennifer, Daniel & Sabrina, Allysa, David
Mienke & Andy - Leah, Kris, Andrew, Derek, Victoria
Anita & Tom - Erik, Shanna Lee, Jordan
Dolf - Elizabeth, Dolf

Home Address: 68 Taylor Drive, Barrie ON L49 8K5

Obituaries

Nov. 11, 1906 July 14, 2003
Espelo, The Netherlands Essex, Ont.

After 96 years of life, the Lord has taken

ALBERT JOHN ZWIERS

our Father, Opa, great-opa and great-great-opa, home to be with him forever.

He was predeceased by his loving wife Christina in 2002.
Dear father of:
Hendrika Draaijer-Rijssen, *The Neth.*
Herman & Margie Zwiers, *Sarnia,ON*
Henry & Audrey Zwiers, *Orillia,ON*
Jerry & Corrie Zwiers, *Ruthven,ON*
Gerda & Bill Bovenkamp, *Essex,ON*
Alice & Irwin Agocs, *Ruthven,ON*

Albert John was Opa to 23 grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-granddaughter.
Dear brother of Hendrika Brinks.
Predeceased by
a son-in-law Ab Draaijer 2001and by 2 brothers in The Netherlands.

Service of remembrance and worship was held at the Essex Christian Reformed Church.

Mailing address: H. Zwiers
1365 Murphy Rd
Sarnia ON N7S 2Y7

Born: Dec. 11, 1910, Andijk, The Netherlands
Died: July 13, 2003, Chatham, Ontario

MARGARET HOFLAND (VRIEND)
(nee Grietje Groot)

Called home by her heavenly Father after a long and full life.
"The Lord is my Shepherd,
I shall not want" Psalm 23

She will be missed by her loving children:
Gertrude & Richard Stienstra
Peter Vriend
John & Barb Vriend
Willa & Gary Ellwood
Tina & Bernie Bax
Jake & Minka Vriend
22 grandchildren &
27 great-grandchildren
will miss Granny dearly
Her living siblings:
Elsie Visser
Patricia Sluys
Mien Heemsbergen
Jochem Groot
Predeceased by her husbands:
Peter Vriend (1967)
Frans Hofland (1993)
Predeceased by two children:
Jacob Vriend (1942)
Casey Vriend (1958)

The funeral was held on Wednesday, July 16 at the First Christian Reformed Church in Chatham.
Correspondence address: Jake Vriend
10 Echo Drive, Guelph ON N1G 1H2

RIEMKE (RENA) HOGETERP

Surrounded by her loving family after a battle courageously fought, Rena went home to be with Jesus on Sun., July 13, 2003 in the 82nd year of a rich, full life.

Beloved wife of Ralph, RR 4, Cayuga.
Precious mother of:
Andy & Betsy, *Cayuga*
Rose & John De Jong, *Victoria,BC*
Lilly & Charlie Snyder, *Caledonia*
Hazel & Clarence Snyder, *Caledonia*
Evelyn & Albert Snyder, *Caledonia*
Peter & Joanne, *Cayuga*
Anita & Bob Thomson, *Cayuga*
Dorothy & John Voordenhout, *Burlington*
and the late Rodney (1977).

Dear Beppe of 28 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.
Sister-in-law of Hazel de Bock,
Patricia Hogeterp,
Lucy Hogeterp
and Susan Hogeterp.

A celebration to honor her life took place on Wednesday, July 16, 2003 at 2 p.m. at the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church.

"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."
Job 1:21b

Correspondence address:
Ralph Hogeterp RR #4
Cayuga ON N0A 1E0

Classifieds

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St. Catharines - Share house with Christian young person. Ideal for students. Available Sep.1, 2003. On bus route and close to Fairview Mall. Call Anita at: **905-684-5806**.

Searching for a Christian female to **share an apartment** with our high functioning challenged daughter in exchange for low cost accommodations. We live in **Welland** close to Niagara College and the Seaway Mall. For more information call **905 735 7379** or e mail teddykstra2@yahoo.ca

APT FOR RENT – all furnished – prefer 2 girl. 2 bedrooms 18X24, kitchen, bath. Very nice rooms. Close to Fanshawe in **London**. Call: **1-519-451-6787**

New, **2-bedroom**, bright, lower level **apartment**, Holland Marsh, 5 miles from Newmarket (Hwy #400 and #9). Has fridge, stove, shared laundry and central vac. No smokers or pets. $1,000 per month, inclusive. Available Sept 1. Call Ralph/Emmy Lise at **905-775-4241**

For sale: collection of 180 **theological books** in the Dutch language - many well known theologians of Reformed persuasion. A list of the books is available upon request. Call:

Job Opportunities

First Christian Reformed Church of **Hamilton** Ontario seeks a **part-time** (2 days/week) **Homestead Club Coordinator.**

To develop, implement and lead a ministry directed to those suffering with mental illness. Duties include: organize and lead a Homestead Club, minister to group members, plan activities, lead Bible studies, coordinate volunteers, liaise with the church community and Homestead Christian Care, and conduct associated administrative duties.
Applicants must be committed to Christ, his church and its mission; have experience working with people with special needs; and have an educational background related to mental illness or the social service field.
Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience.
If interested apply in writing to:

The Inner City Ministry Committee
First Christian Reformed Church
181 Charlton Ave. W. **Tel: 905-528-3826**
Hamilton, ON L8P 2C9 **Email: office@firsthamilton.ca**

First Christian Reformed Church of **Hamilton** Ontario seeks a **full-time Outreach Ministry Coordinator.**

To provide support for existing outreach ministries, give leadership in the development and implementation of an Inner City Ministry, and prepare the church community for kingdom service.
Applicants must be committed to Christ, his church and its mission; embrace the Reformed world-and-life-view; possess gifts and skills in the areas of leadership, administration, communication, interpersonal relations and computer technology; have a bachelor's degree or its equivalent (with some theological training preferred); and be a self-starter.
Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience.

The Inner City Ministry Committee
First Christian Reformed Church
181 Charlton Ave. W. **Tel: 905-528-3826**
Hamilton, ON L8P 2C9 **Email: office@firsthamilton.ca**

YOUTH DIRECTOR/HALF TIME:

WANTED, a loyal servant, who is gifted in youth ministries and whose love for God and His people is present in his/her everyday walk. This self-motivated and enthusiastic person will use his/her gifts to direct, lead and motivate today's young people into tomorrow's leaders. For further information or to send your resume, contact: Youth Director Search, First CRC, PO Box 22039 204 First Ave, **St. Thomas, ON** N5R 6A1 or email firstcrcstthomas@canada.com.

YOUTH DIRECTOR/PASTOR

The three Christian Reformed Churches of **Sarnia**, Ontario are seeking a **full time Youth Director/Pastor** to continue a unique and exciting combined youth ministry. Solid programming & commiteed volunteer leadership is already in place. Candidate must have strong relational and administrative skills plus the desire and ability to lead and equip our youth, helping them to grow in faith and service to our Lord.
Please send resume and inquiries to:

Art Capelle,
2261Confederation, Sarnia, Ontario, N7T-7H3,
519-337-4660 or email: artc@rivernet.net

CHAPLAIN TO SEAFARERS,
Montreal, Quebec.

With gratitude to him and Mrs. Karin Burghart for their years of service, the Board of Seaway Ministry announces the impending retirement of the Rev. Lloyd Burghart as of April 2004. We are therefore soliciting applications from qualified women or men for the position. We are looking for the following qualifications:

- The ability to be ordained as evangelist in the CRC is a minimum.
- Training and experience suitable to the position.
- A capacity to work in an ecumenical setting and with diverse staff and volunteers.
- A gift for languages and dealing with diverse cultures.
- A disposition for working with a Board and the congregations supporting the work

Remuneration and benefits will be commensurate with status and experience. Applications can be sent to:

Pastor John Veenstra, Vice-Chair, BSM,
john.veenstra@sympatico.ca, tel. 905 436-3255.
918 Regent Drive, Oshawa, Ont. L1G1J1.

The Ministry to Seafarers sponsored by the Christian Reformed Churches of British Columbia invites applications for a full time

Ministry to Seafarers Chaplain
to serve in the Port of Vancouver, BC, Canada

The Christian Reformed Churches in British Columbia have long sponsored a ministry to seafarers who visit the Port of Vancouver. This ministry has been in existence for over 30 years and plays a key role in an ecumenical outreach to over 15,000 seafarers annually from over 75 different countries who come through our ports. Due to the retirement of Rev. Simon Wolfert, the Ministry to Seafarers Committee is seeking to find another chaplain who can give leadership to this vibrant ministry.

We are looking for a Christian with a strong commitment to the Reformed faith;

- Is self motivated and able to work within a team setting,
- Has theological training, though ordination as a Minister of the Word is not a prerequisite.
- Has experience in cross cultural missions
- Has experience working pastorally with a wide variety of people.
- Innovative in finding new approaches to connect this ministry with the supporting constituency
- Is able to relate well to religious and ethnically diverse groups of seafarers who visit the Ministry Center
- Is physically able to visit on board ships
- Is able to nurture healthy working relationships with other volunteers and is committed to fostering ecumenical partnerships with other denominations who share in this ministry at the Flying Angel Club (Ministry Center)

A job description is available upon request. Please send a letter of application, a complete resume, two reference letters as well as a brief outline of a personal vision for this Ministry to Seafarers to:

Mrs. Githa De Groot
#152 - 32691 Garibaldi Drive
Abbotsford, BC V2T 5T7
Email: johngitha@shaw.ca
Deadline for applications to be considered is September 1, 2003

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Attention Golfers

On Wed. **Sep.17** Bethesda will host their 2nd Annual **Charity Golf Tournament** at the Links of Rockway Glen in **St. Catharines**. Come and enjoy lunch, dinner, 18 holes of golf, including cart rental and prizes. Tickets are $150.00 each. For more info, please call **905-684-6918**, ext. 231 (Marg) or ext. 242 (Linda).

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University Campus Ministries Welcomes Students

HURON CAMPUS MINISTRY AT WATERLOO

Waterloo Christian Reformed Chur is pleased to invite new and returning students to a special

STUDENT WELCOME SERVICE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 200310:30 AM

After the service information about campus ministry will be presented and an excellent luncheon served for parents and students.

Contact **Chaplain Graham E. Morbey** for further information:
519-886-1474 or **519-884-1970 x2739**
gmorbey@wlu.ca
The Waterloo Christian Reformed Church is located at 209 Bearinger Road, Waterloo

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For more info. contact campus pastor Phil Apol: ap12@post.queensu.ca or (613)533-2962.

University of Toronto Campus Ministry

Campus ministers Brian Walsh and **Geoff Wichert** welcome new and returning students to the University of Toronto at **TWO EVENTS** during the first week of classes.
On **Tuesday, September 9, at 7:30AM** (yes you read the time correctly!) the first **Wine Before Breakfast** worship service of the year will be held in the chapel at Wycliffe College. Dr. Walsh preaching. And then on **Thursday, September 11** the Graduate Christian Fellowship will hold its **opening reception** in the CRC chaplain's office from **5.30PM until 8.00PM**
(undergraduates are always welcome).
Both events happen at Wycliffe College, 5 Hoskin Ave.
For more **information** about ministry events check out our web site at **http://chaplains.sa.utoronto.ca/crc**, or call the office at **416 596 2439.**

York University, Toronto

York Campus Ministry
(Christian Reformed Church)
Campus Minister: Mr. Shiao C. Chong
Shared Office: York Varsity Christian Fellowship Office, Room 312, Student Center, York University
Cell: 416-707-5315 **Email**: ycm@sympatico.ca
Mailing Address: 2670 Inlake Court, Mississauga, ON L5N 2A7
The York Campus Ministry partners with the Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship chapter at York. It serves undergraduate, graduate and international students.
Programs include: Weekly Study Groups, Graduate Christian Fellowship meetings, York Varsity Christian Fellowship meetings, English Corner (International Students Outreach Ministry), and individual appointments.
Please join the **Start of Year BBQ** on **September 20**, Saturday, 5 pm, at the Campus Minister's home. Contact Chong for more information.

BROCK CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Faith, Friends, Falls!
Coming to Brock? Stop by chaplain Peter Schuurman's office to get details on **orientation events** and **Christian discipleship opportunities** with Campus Ministries and the Brock Christian Fellowship —and to learn about the Niagara Escarpment and the Falls!
Peter Schuurman, DeCew Residence
office 216, 905-688-5550 ext. 3134
pschuurm@spartan.ac.brocku.ca

Christian Reformed Church
Dalhousie Campus Ministry

GREET THE GEEKS
... is one of the exciting programs of the Christian Reformed Campus Ministry in **Halifax, Nova Scotia.**
We also run Bible studies, discussions, and food and sharing evenings.
And, of course, we love to meet anytime anywhere for coffee.
In fact, we can show you the best spots in Halifax!

Contact **Stephen Martin (swmartin@dal.ca, 902-494-2287)** or visit us online at **www.dal.ca/crcministry.**

Students coming to the
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
and
Fanshawe Community College:
Welcome!

For information on the beginning of the year BBQ, worship at local churches, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship student ministries, mid-day get togethers, Christian lecture and discussion series, and other things planned for the coming year, please contact our **ministry staff!**

Adrienne Schaafsma, Student Assistant bluetomatoes@hotmail.com (519) 674-0458
Michael Veenema, Chaplain at University of Western Ontario mveenema@uwo.ca (519) 438-1242
Grace Miedema, Chaplain at Fanshawe College grace.miedema@sympatico.ca (519) 421-1603

Events/Advertising

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is $7.50 per line, or $1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion

Sep 17 Bethesda Home will host their Annual Charity Golf Tournament at Rockway Glen in **St. Catharines** Includes lunch, dinner, 18 holes of golf, cart, prizes. For info: 905-684-6918 ext. 231 or 242

Oct 10-14 The **Transcona** CRC (Winnipeg, Manitoba) will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary with praise, thanksgiving & fellowship. For info call: Bev Steendam at 204-853-2150 or jsteenda@mts.net

Oct 11,12 First CRC, **Guelph**, Ont. 50th anniversary. Celebrations include childrens programs, Social, Banquet. See September issue for more details or e-mail:crc-guelph@sentex.net

Oct 18 Netherlands Bazaar, **Thornhill** Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Avenue, Thornhill. Market Place: Crafts, etc. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Auction 7 p.m. - 10 p.m. Dutch food delicacies 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Admission free. For information, call 905-477-1243

Dec 5, 6,7 **Bethel** CRC **of Lacombe, Alberta**, 50th anniversary - weekend of praise, thanksgiving and fellowship All former and present members and friends are invited. For info, call: Eleanor Wildeboer at 403-782-2602 or e-mail wilelwildeboer@aol.com (See ad Mar 17 issue)

Roy Thomson Hall

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Information available from:
Rosanne van der Woerd
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905-639-9054

The Transcona Christian Reformed Church
will be celebrating their
50TH ANNIVERSARY
October 10-14, 2003.
Celebration events include a Friday night Cofee House, Saturday evening Banquet and Special Worship services Sunday and Monday. For Banquet tickets or more details call Bev Steendam at 1-204-853-2150 or e-mail jsteenda@mts.net
Visit our website www.mts.net/~vanboven

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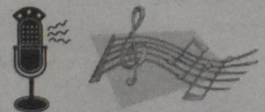
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News

Founder of world's largest Christian ministry remembered

ORLANDO, Fla. (EP) - Anyone who has ever read the Four Spiritual Laws, seen the "Jesus" film or been drawn closer to God via the world's largest Christian ministry owes William R. "Bill" Bright a debt of gratitude – a debt being covered now by Bright's final reward. The 81-year-old founder of Campus Crusade for Christ died July 19 from complications related to pulmonary fibrosis.

Church leaders from around the world joined Bright's friends and family at First Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla., on July 30 to honor a man who helped deliver the message of Christ to billions.

"I really believe after the first century Christians, there has been no one who has been more influential for Christ or whose work has reached more of the world than Dr. Bill Bright and the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ," said Focus on the Family's James Dobson. He dedicated his July 21 radio broadcast to Bright's memory.

"A Christian can't lose"

A California entrepreneur and self-described "happy pagan," before he accepted Christ in 1947, Bright poured his energy into his new faith and started Campus Crusade four years later to reach students at UCLA. The ministry spread quickly and is now a $374 million-a-year organization with 26,000 full-time employees and more than 225,000 trained volunteers in 191 countries. Bright's campus focus broadened to include some 60 niche ministries targeting people from all walks of life, from those in the military to the entertainment industry, high school students to diplomats.

"A Christian can't lose," Bright said in a 2001 interview. "If we live, we go on serving him. That's an adventure. If we die, we're in heaven with him, and that's incredible."

With a goal of introducing Jesus Christ to "every living person on earth," the Oklahoma native worked to equip Christians with evangelistic tools. In 1956, he wrote the "Four Spiritual Laws," boiling the basics of the faith down to just 77 words. The pamphlet, which has since been printed in roughly 200 languages and distributed to more than 2.5 billion people, is the most widely disseminated religious booklet in history. Bright authored more than 100 publications and used television and radio, the Internet, billboards, phone banks, international training conferences and other vehicles to spread God's word.

"Jesus" film

In the late 1970s, Bright commissioned a two-hour film on the life of Christ based on the book of Luke. The "Jesus" film has since been viewed by more than 5.1 billion people in 234 countries and translated into more than 800 languages.

"More than 121 million people have accepted Christ as a result of this film," said Alan Sears. "I can just hear Dr. Bright now as he is receiving the words that we all want to hear someday: 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

Evangelists everywhere hailed Bright's work as news of his death spread.

"He has carried a burden on his heart as few men that I've ever known. A burden for the evangelization of the world," said Rev. Billy Graham. "He is a man whose sincerity and integrity and devotion to our Lord have been an inspiration and a blessing to me ever since the early days of my ministry."

In 1996 Bright won the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. He donated his prize money, more than $1 million, to causes promoting the spiritual benefits of fasting and prayer. Since 1994, Campus Crusade has sponsored seven fasting and prayer events, drawing tens of thousands together via satellite and the Internet.

In 2000, Bright received several awards including the Lifetime Achievement Award from both the National Association of Evangelicals and the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association. When Campus Crusade celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2001, Bright passed the presidency to his chosen successor, the Rev. Steve Douglass.

Though he had struggled with pulmonary fibrosis for two years, Bright and his wife, Vonette, remained active with their ministries. The day before his death, the couple participated via telephone in the worship service at Campus Crusade's bi-annual U.S. Staff Conference at Colorado State University. Though Bright was unable to speak at the time, his staffers did get a word from him via a video address recently recorded and played at a private memorial service on July 21. The event, held in Fort Collins, Colo. for staff and family members, drew some 5,000.

*Children in the **Jesus Film***

Sudanese refugees in Kenya killed in conflict with locals

Conflicts between refugees, especially when they come in large numbers, and host communities are commonplace, but in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya violent confrontations between Sudanese asylum seekers and the resident Turkanas have turned deadly. Makur Kot Dhuor of the All Africa News Agency (AANA) has attempted to discover what lies behind the violence.

A fight on June 28 between Turkana villagers and some of the refugees resulted in the death of two Sudanese men. In retaliation, two days later refugees killed a Turkana villager and tossed his body into a latrine.

The next day, armed Turkanas attacked the Kakuma Refugee Camp killing ten refugees and losing two of their own. The conflict continued to escalate.

Turkana youths ran amok and attacked the premises of Norwegian People Aid (NPA) and Presbyterian Relief and Development Agency (PRDA), claiming that the former had offered refuge to a Sudanese man who had hurled a grenade into a Turkana homestead. They looted and caused extensive damages to the offices of the PRDA. A day later, Turkana youths also stormed the local headquarters of the UN aid agency to protest.

This chronology of violent events within just one week portrays the precarious relationship between refugees in Kakuma, and the Turkana host community, said the AANA reporter Dhuor.

Kakuma refugee camp is situated in northern Kenya, about 1,000 km of Nairobi. The camp has a population of 82,216 refugees of eleven nationalities, of which 71 percent are Sudanese. The vast camp occupies 25 sq. km.

The relationship between the Turkana and the Sudanese refugees has never been cordial, says Dhuor. Between 1992 and September 2002, 32 refugees have been killed, several by the Turkana. A Sudanese girl was killed in February by the Turkana during an attempted rape and another was killed in similar circumstances in March. Several Sudanese women have also been raped at gun point when fetching firewood.

Occupied by foreigners

The Turkana are angry that their land had been occupied by foreigners, mainly Sudanese. They accuse the Sudanese refugees of crimes such as theft, which, they said, did not occur before the coming of the refugees to their area 11 years ago. In May 1994, a meeting was held between Sudanese refugees and the Turkana after the Sudanese had heard rumors that the latter were going to "finish" them.

At that time sixty goats were paid to the Sudanese refugee community in compensation for a Sudanese killed by some Turkana the previous year, but this did not seem to resolve the conflict.

In an interview, the UNHCR's representative Rossela said cattle rustling between the Dinka of southern Sudan and the Turkana in Kenya also played a central role in the conflict between the two communities. Prior to the recent Kakuma attacks, he said, there had been rumors that Turkanas had been killed in a cattle rustling incident, and a cow was spotted within the refugee camp.

Former Assistant Labour Minister of Kenya, Ekwe Ethuro, said that the refugees are a burden to the local community and should be moved elsewhere or repatriated.

Rossela said, "Relocation of the camp is very complex because of the difficulty to locate an area."

"Secondly, a lot of money has been invested in the already existing infrastructure in the camp.... It is not an easy affair to move about 85,000 refugees of different nationalities to a new camp."

Margaret Yaar, a 42 year-old refugee mother of seven children, said: "We escaped with our children from Sudan to Ethiopia because of war, and from Ethiopia ... to Pochalla in southern Sudan, then to Narus and eventually we found ourselves in Kenya with our children. Now it is the same children who are being killed by the Turkana.

"Why are we being killed? Where is the Kenyan Government? Our relationship with the Turkana has proved bad, so we want to be taken to any part of Kenya where we can establish good relationship with other ethnic groups."

Harry der Nederlanden with files from AANA.